

**CULT
MOVIES**

GIRLS OF JAMES BOND: THE 007 CURSE!



NO. 37

CULT MOVIES

**TERRORS OF
BELA LUGOSI**

**COVERGIRL
MIKO LEE
UNCOVERED!**

**BARBARA
PAYTON:**

**HER TRAGIC LIFE & TIMES
SPECIAL ARTICLE
BY JOHN O'DOWD**

**MORE!
WILLIAM WINCKLER'S
...DOUBLE-D AVENGER**

\$5.95 USA/\$7.95 CANADA



**~FAREWELL~
DORIS WISHMAN**





(They're not
just creatures
wearing
numbers.)

(They're also
ten good
reasons to read
CULT MOVIES
MAGAZINE.)

SUBSCRIBE!

SIX ISSUES FOR \$30

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO
(NOTE NEW ADDRESS)

CULT MOVIES MAGAZINE
P.O. Box 1047
Hollywood, CA 90078



Yup I want to subscribe to CULT MOVIES MAGAZINE.

Enclosed is \$30.

Send to:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____



Smoking backstage, beneath the "No Smoking" sign
Photo courtesy of Bela G. Lugosi from his father's personal scrapbooks.

CULT MOVIES

CULT MOVIES

Publisher:
Cameo Distributors LLC

Editor-in-chief:
Michael Copner

Special Interest Editor:
Buddy Barnett

Contributing Editor:
Forrest J Ackerman

Layout Artists:
Mike Malloy
Krysta Olson

Creative Consultant:
Coco Kiyonaga

Japanese Film Consultant:
Guy Mariner Tucker

Hawaiian Correspondent:
Joe Moe

Photo Research:
Marta Dobrovitz

This issue dedicated to Ray Greene
for championing the art of grindhouse cinema.

Special Thanks to:

Bela G. Lugosi, Frank DeLo Sinto, Johanne Tourner and the Lugosaphiles, Curtis Harrington, Kevin Thomas, Gino Colletti, Harold Fertanka, Bob Chynn, Ken Schuster, John Nordin, Charles Heard, Tom Weaver, Fred Olen Ray, Eric Cedin, Katherine Orson, Michael F. Blake, Ed & Caroline Plumb, Gary Don Rhodes, Jan Henderson, Sara Kaeloff, Mike & Lisa Vianey, Greg Mank, Terry Pace, Brad Lineweaver, Mano Tolland, Christine Ortiz, Ron Borst, David DeVille, Lisa Mitchell, Verne Langdon, Jemee Warren and a special thanks to Keith Jacobs

Cult Movies #37 is published quarterly by Cult Movies, P.O. Box 1047, Hollywood, CA 90078-1047. Nothing in this issue may be reproduced, in whole or in part, by any means, including electronic, radio, or television, without prior written permission from the publisher. Contributions are invited, however no responsibility can be accepted for unsolicited manuscripts, artwork, letters or photographs. All such correspondence will be considered authorized for publication. Opinions expressed in letters, articles, or advertisements are not necessarily those of the publisher. All photographs and art work within the magazine are the property of the copyright owners and are believed to be authorized for reproduction. Any similarities to real persons, alive or deceased is purely coincidental. Appearance of advertisements does not constitute endorsement by the Publisher. Publisher is not responsible for any third party advertisements in this publication. Publisher is not responsible for typographical errors.

VISIT CULT MOVIES ON THE INTERNET AT:
<http://www.cult-movies.com>
Manufactured in the USA.

deep inside

Welcome to our 37th issue.

First of all, before anything else, there's an absolutely crucial "need-to-say" directed to each of you. Last time, just as our 36th issue was being sent to subscribers and hitting the national newsstands, we lost our mailing address on Sunset Boulevard. Our office was in the historic old Hollywood Palladium, which has been the home of a wide variety of concerts over the years. Mick Jagger played there. For some years the Palladium was home of the Lawrence Welk television show. Lots of great dancing and music has emanated from that hallowed hall.

The building also housed a series of small street-front offices, recently occupied by a travel agency, a United Parcel outlet, a year 'round tax consultant -- and us. We all got thrown out with no notice, the official word being that the Palladium was soon to be torn down. Currently it looks like it's being fixed up, and this week there've been seminars in the main hall, and a concert by *Sinatra and the Banshees*. Looks like pretty good business.

At any rate, we had to hustle to find a new location, and a new place to receive our mail. We settled on getting a box at the beautiful old Hollywood Post Office on Wilcox Street, built in 1926. Hopefully THAT won't be torn down soon. Our new address is: Cult Movies, P.O. Box 1047, Hollywood, CA 90078-1047. At once I put in for an address change, but it seems that only some of our mail has been forwarded. In fact, I fear I lost quite a bit of mail over the last few months. If you wrote letters or ordered things and your letter was returned, it's NOT because we've ceased our activities. If you drop it in the mail again, I should get it within several days, since I check the mail every day.

All I can say is, sorry for the inconvenience, and I DO look forward to hearing from you!

Another important follow up should be to mention the great response we got to that one-page article on the Mexican dancer, Tongolele. You readers sent in photos, confessions, and we even picked up some new subscribers because of that article! We learned that she appeared more in America than I indicated in that short piece I wrote, and that she was a sensation in Miami, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles (at the Hawaiian Gardens theater, among others.)

Furthermore, in November of this year, Tongolele will be appearing at UCLA for a film program where she will receive an award honoring her achievements in International Cinema. The program is free of charge, and open to the public. The Artist will be appearing in person, and will be joined by many special guests. Anyone seeking further information can call the organizer, Miss Macarena Quiroz, Editorial Director at Televisa, who can provide more details. Her office in Mexico is: 011-52-555-261-2600. (Perfect English is spoken at her office, so don't be put off from calling). I've just spoken to Tongolele,



who is planning some special surprises of her own for the show, and looks forward to meeting fans and friends at the program. We hope to see you there. It will be an evening of importance to fans of Mexican film!

In this retro-age, where everything seems familiar and re-hashed, somehow everything also seems "like only yesterday" I was just thinking how it seemed like only a year or two since we put our first issue of *Cult Movies* together. In truth, it's been twelve years.

The first issue was actually our tribute to Bela Lugosi, and I thought that would be the ONLY issue we'd ever do. We followed up with a few more, all under the catch-all title of "Videosonic Arts." That title was bestowed free, courtesy of Korla Pandit. "Let them think you've got lots more titles coming, or they'll never pay you for the FIRST one," advised Mr. Pandit, a musical artist who felt he'd been cheated more than once by agents, producers, and syndicates. Korla, who was a guest at my home during the planning of our first zine, came up with the "Videosonic" label. Some people, such as our eventual cover artist, Dave Stevens, thought it was great. Other individuals, such as Mike Vraney of *Something Weird Video*, told us to get rid of that Rocket-sonic-tronic name as soon as possible). We eventually did, once we settled on *Cult Movies* as the continuing title.

But originally, the idea was to run as much new and different photos and posters from my collection and that of Buddy Barnett, and getting our thoughts into print in a way that we probably couldn't through any other magazine going at the time. Buddy was all for it from the very beginning. It didn't take long to realize that he is probably the greatest Lugosi fan in the country!

I thought I had a great printer in a Hungarian fellow named Lazlo, who promised the moon, but couldn't deliver a firefly. He was so busy with his countless get-rich scams that he barely had time to run his printing business. He did print our pages, but I ended up having to collate, fold and stitch-bind the book-a-zines together by hand. I wonder if this makes the zines more valuable, as a hand-crafted item, rather than machine mass-produced item?

The first printing was a mere 1,000 copies, which sold out at once through one comicbook distributor, and one ad I took out in "The Big Reel". Feeling rich with success, I printed another 2,000, and managed to get rid of half of those right away; there are still 50 or so copies left. Once those are gone, there will be no more.

Loveable Lazlo continued to print the next few things we did, including a pretty good

'zine on old television. But Lazlo was a trip. He had a huge Hungarian girlfriend who was taller than any basketball player I've ever seen. I forget her name. She had a beauty parlor in Beverly Hills, and one of her scams was selling a colored water and oil mixture in nice bottles for \$75 as GENUINE hair restorer. I know about the scam because they offered me a few bucks to be a hair model in the brochure they printed up to sell this stuff. The idea was simple. Step 1. Take a picture of me now, with all my hair. That became the AFTER picture. Step 2. Shave off most of my hair right down to an Uncle Fester look and take a picture of me that way. That became the BEFORE picture, before I started using their miraculous hair restorer that grew a full head of hair in 10 days. The main expense was in the bottle and the beautiful brochure. I don't know how much of this junk they sold, but at \$75 a pop, it doesn't take a lot to make some nice cash.

The beautician also wanted me to come over to her house to hear another get-rich quick scam. She claimed to have worked as a secretary at the home of Zsa Zsa Gabor, and had some scandalous story about her that she wanted me to help her write up in suitable manuscript form and sell to the *National Enquirer*. I did go to her house to hear what the scandal was, but the beautician was so stoned she couldn't quit laughing. She was never able to calm down enough to tell me the dirt she had on Zsa Zsa. I stayed long into the night, but left the house without ever hearing the nasties she planned to spill about her glamorous fellow countrywoman. I never saw the tall, laughing beautician again.

Shortly after, our printer vanished from Los Angeles, and I haven't seen him, either. We switched to a different style of printing on a giant web press. Since issue #4, I haven't had to fold, trim and staple by hand.

We've never forgotten our roots, and how we got our start. We've had the Great Lugosi on our covers six different times, including a beautiful *White Zombie* rendering by Dave Stevens on Lucky #13. Every one of our issues has had SOME kind of feature about the world's greatest vampire, sometimes by masterful sources like Frank Dello Stritto and even Bela G. Lugosi. Buddy Barnett did a full and unique filmbook treatment of *The Ape Man* in issue #18.

But the zine has grown to include all kinds of true cult figures, from *The Three Stooges* to John Waters, as well as individuals the average person might not consider as in the running for cult stardom, from sweet little Harry Langdon (one of the greatest comedians of the silent screen), to sweet little Annabel Chong (one of the hottest tails

to be told on the adult screen). The issues with Ms. Chong and with Alfred Hitchcock on the cover sold the best. This past year our sales have been on an upward curve.

Over the past 12 years we've learned quite a bit about you, the reader at home. Often times when an article is good, we don't get much praise about it; perhaps only a few letters to comment or correct something in the piece. But let something appear that you do NOT approve of, and we may get bags of mail letting us know your feelings. For example, you absolutely do not pick up an entertainment magazine expecting to read a political lecture or attend history class, especially if you feel you're being talked down to by someone who THINKS he knows the score. (See? I do read your letters, whether I print them all or not.)

Oddly enough, and happily for me, this hostility doesn't seem to carry over into spiritualism or religion. We've often mentioned and quoted Dr. Manly Palmer Hall, of course there's the obvious Lugosi connection there. Once in a while we've mentioned various "Hollywood saviors", such as the great yogi Paramahansa Yogananda, and the slightly scandalous Amie Semple McPherson. Of course, I've often mentioned my friend, the guru/entertainer from India, the great musician Korla Pandit. No one has ever written to complain about this kind of thing. I don't know if this equates to GREATER magazine sales, but at least no one has ever threatened to cancel their subscription or accuse me of trying to shove personal spiritual ideals down the public's throat.

For this I am very happy. I'll read lightly in these areas, but I happen to believe very strongly in these late night, Art Bell related topics. I've been in many buildings (mostly very old theaters where I've worked) and chanced to witness seemingly supernatural events to do with amplifier switches turning themselves on and off, disembodied voices carrying on deep discussion in an empty, locked, closed up movie theater, and so forth. In Seattle I witnessed some kind of UFO activity, heard the report on the local radio news, then called the station to find out about an update on the report, only to have them deny that they ever broadcast such a news report. Hence, I believe in the otherworldly as much as I believe in conspiracy theories, government cover-ups.

Sometimes these topics become the makings of our best sci-fi and horror films, so I don't feel they're out of place (so long as they're kept IN their place) in *Cult Movies* magazine. And since no one's ever complained, I assume you might agree with me.

Something our readers are more vocal about is the subject of explicit adult entertainment, and at times we've had some

very lively discussion going on in our letters column about the pros and cons of this topic. My feeling has always been that "film is film." End of story. There's comedies, documentaries, serials, cartoons, trailers, and so on down the line. Oh, yeah, and then there's X-rated films. When dear old James Warren was trying to start his *Famous Monsters* magazine, many distributors and potential advertisers told him his zine was virtually the same thing as pornography. Naturally, I don't think we concur with that.

In Ray Greene's documentary about exploitation films, *Schlock*, dear, daffy, Doris Wishman displays the wisdom of Solomon and Plato combined. "You ask me if I make exploitation films? I say to you, anytime you advertise something, you are exploiting it." The dear old girl took her simple logic to the grave with her, as Doris has just died as we are getting ready to go to press.

Earlier this summer I cried when I read that Linda Lovelace had died. Linda was a woman who gave much to the adult film industry, obviously much more than the industry ever gave back to her. In an early *Cult Movies* magazine I wrote a negative take on "turncoat Linda", based on my reflections on her books "Out of Bondage"

and "Ordeal", and on a brief encounter I had with her when she was on tour in the early 1980's, doing TV talk show appearances to promote those books. I've changed my opinion somehow in ten or so years. The girl who starred in *Deep Throat* and became a household name throughout the world was a martyr who deserved more than this world could ever give her. It's eerie and ironic that she should die on the 30th Anniversary of the filming of that erotic epic. She'd had a serious car accident BEFORE the filming of *Deep Throat*, such that the director never had Linda bare her torso for filming, and reveal the hideous scars on her body. Now, in the spring of 2002, Linda endured another car crash, this one a fatality.

So far, no one has put her on any magazine covers that I've seen, or done a tribute fitting of the first lady of XXX. Down the line sometime I'd like to run a tribute to her in *Cult Movies*. I wonder how many film fans would dare claim *Deep Throat*'s not a cultish film classic?

By now many people have visited or seen pictures of the splendid new Kodak Theater on Hollywood Boulevard. This is the new

home of the Oscar Award shows, and many other significant Hollywood events throughout the year. The most striking aspect of it from the outside is the giant replica of the Babylonian set from D.W. Griffith's film *Intolerance*, including the massive elephants atop massive pillars. This is built into a three-story outdoor shopping pavilion, adjoining the refurbished Grauman's Chinese Theater. It is all pretty spectacular for local folks and tourists.

One sidelight that is curious, though it went un-reported at the time, is that after one week of the opening of the pavilion, one of the steps on the grand stairway collapsed onto the sidewalk on Hollywood Blvd., and was blocked off for several weeks until it could be repaired. Whether this was from shoddy materials or shoddy workmanship (or both), is unknown. But the place has been open and running smoothly for nine months, and signals a re-birth of the west side of Hollywood, and the revitalization of one hell of a glamorous boulevard.

Enough chatter for one issue. We've got another variety filled issue.

So...on with the show!

Michael Copner

Lugosi: Hollywood's Dracula

The award-winning documentary film is now available on DVD in its most complete version ever. Special collector's set includes over 2 1/2 hours of rare video, ranging from all of the known Hungarian footage of the actor to a lengthy oncamera interview with his last wife Hope Lugosi.

Bonus second disc features a newly-discovered Lugosi political interview and variety of radio show rarities!

Order yours today for \$20 plus \$3 postage (domestic) by visiting www.lugosidvd.com or by mailing a check/mo made out to Gary Rhodes at P.O. Box 6016 Norman, OK 73070-6016

Enter the world of Bela Lugosi through this limited collector's set before it disappears!

We Got Mail! letters to the editor

Regarding "A Tribute to W.C. Fields" by Brad Linaweaver, the film *It's A Gift* (1934) was made by Paramount. Also, why was there no mention of Fields' silent films? *Sally of the Sawdust* (1925), the first version of *Poppy*, *That Royal Girl* (1926), all with Carol Dempster. It's the *Old Army Game* (with Louise Brooks), *So's Your Old Man*, etc. I hope he does a second feature article on Fields in the silent years which have never been done in a creative way.

Regarding an article on Abbott and Candido in issue #25, Candy's partner with Gene Austin was Coco Heimel. In the movie *Songs and Saddles* (1938) which had Gene Austin in the lead he was supported by Coco and Candy Hall.

What's going in with your ever shrinking movie review section? And getting back to Fields, how about a story on Carlotta Monti and the films she was in?

H. Pfeffer
Bronx, NY

(Our comedy material seems popular, so there is sure to be more WC Fields in upcoming issues. Regarding the Video/DVD reviews, it they may be the most highly regarded continuing part of our mag. Everybody loves lists. We cut back on it around issue #34 because we became so backlogged when running that book-length Karloff biography. With the issue you now hold, we are getting back to normal, running a fuller review section than we have in quite a while. Next issue will be much expanded to meet the demand. MC)

Issue #32 was a great zine. I was really glad to see the resurrection of, what I believe to be, Vincent Price's greatest movie, *The Last Man on Earth*. This is a true horror classic, with Price actually playing a straight not-so-hammy role for a change. I've picked up the full frame version which is distributed by VCI. The picture quality isn't too bad, at least not as bad as sources indicate. Recently, the movie was shown on the SPACE Channel, and they aired the widescreen version. A helluva lot better in it's original theatrical format.

For an Italian film, the dubbing is near perfect. Some scenes though,

have no sense of continuity. For example; when Price loads the first two corpses into the back of his 1956 Chevy Wagon, the dead girl is on the right side and the dead guy is on the left. But when he arrives at the pit, the corpses have switched sides. Then, Price only throws one corpse into the pit, and the other corpse is no longer in the car. When Price goes to drive away, his car is no longer a 1956 Chevy, but it's miraculously transformed into a 1959 Ford. When he's shown driving back home, the car has become a '56 Chevy again.

Other weird scenes, for example, are the mirror store. Why haven't the zombies gone and smashed the mirrors before Price gets to them? Another scene, has Price looking for a new car after the zombies wreck his Chevy. His tastes go for convertibles, but he settles for a wagon, a '59 Ford wagon. The same one which appeared earlier in the film (but we weren't supposed to notice that). There are probably a lot more errors throughout the film, but, if you overlook the production goofups, it is one genuinely creepy horror flick.

Anyone who's seen it knows it's a true classic, a classic which George Romero ripped off when he made *Night of the Living Dead*. It's an obvious tribute (but we're not supposed to notice that).

Russ Bell
Ontario, Canada

It's commendable that you keep Bela Lugosi out there in the public eye by having him in every issue. I guess you've printed 36 issues and he's been in every one of them, often featured on the cover and taking up the greater part of the interior pages. Even Gary Don Rhodes (with his Lugosi fan club) and Bill Obaggy (with HIS Lugosi fan club) couldn't keep going very long, excellent though they were. But you folks keep it going year after year.

I've seen about 40 Lugosi films. Is there any consensus as to what his best one is?

Chester Morgan
Chicago, IL

(It depends on whom you talk to. Bela, Jr. thinks *Dracula* is his dad's greatest film. Personally, I think *The*

Raven is the greatest, the absolute *Citizen Kane* of horror thrillers, and the most flamboyant role of Bela's career. We're going to have an article on this in the next issue of CM, which all Lugosi lovers should find enthralling. MC)



Kann Black, Charlie Chaplin & Arsenio Islas

You've won me over. I always look at your mag, but that one page piece on Tongolele is causing me to subscribe to your magazine. She is truly beautiful, fantastic sounding, and the whole story is the kind of thing you just wouldn't read in any other film magazine, but which always seems to make it's way into yours. Your chance encounter with Arsenio Islas, which led to your talking to the fabulous Tongolele was an astounding read. Here's my \$30 for a subscription. Keep up the good work.

Jerry Lansing
Bronx, NY

Don Mankowski's analysis of the "Fly" films (CM #35) was excellent, and really makes it clear that many so-called science fiction films, while they may be very well done in some respects, are actually fantasies disguised as SF. My favorite examples are *The Tingler* (in which Vincent Price discovers that we all have a small caterpillar-like creature living in our spine) and *Dr. Blood's Coffin* (in which Kieron Moore discovers that decaying corpses can be restored to life with a heart transplant).

And let's not forget *Riders to the Stars*, in which we are told that cosmic rays are not only doing terrible damage to our experimental rockets,

but are gradually turning the moon "into a ball of dust" (!???)

Sad to say, I am not surprised by Forry Ackerman's report of meeting a young woman who never heard of Boris Karloff. In the last few years, I have met several young adults who never heard of Karloff, Lugosi, Edward G. Robinson, Fredric March, or Al Jolson. Almost everyone of my generation (the immediate post-WW2 baby boom) was basically familiar with the show business giants of the previous one or two generations, even if they had died before we were born. But no more! Cultural amnesia is truly upon us.

Marc Russell
Los Angeles, CA

The tribute to Arkoff was my main attraction to your 36th issue, since the AIP movies were what kept me interested in American movies time and time again. I also think there was more originality and creativity and even quality in one AIP movie than in this year's Hollywood output combined.

However I was disturbed by the opening statement made in Buddy Barnett's "Cult Movies Underground" column, although I agree madmen were responsible for a tragedy that left so many people devastated. The support given to the United States and its allies, Europe for instance, in it's difficult struggle is what stuck in my throat. Is Iran an evil, sickening and vile country because they are trying to establish a democracy? Are the women and children in Palestine vile and sickening people as well? Bush has said that Iran is an evil country, although Iran was America's ally in the Afghanistan war. And although Bush is not directly responsible for the violence in Palestine he is responsible for not making a genuine effort to stop it. It is not Sept. 11 that changed our world forever; it's the reaction that came after it.

Steven Rutten

When I was five years old, our family took me to the local drive-ins to see the various Goliath, Hercules, and Samson films imported from Italy. We saw other films also, but those were my favorites. Those films totally influenced my life. For over 30 years

I've worked out daily, especially on the bench press. Today I'm just under 195 pounds, with 19 inch biceps and a 49 inch chest. I plan to come to Hollywood and use my body to get



into the film industry, as I think I'm a fairly photogenic guy. Exposure to these films at an early age may also have influenced my sexual ideas also, if you know what I mean.

So I was delighted to see your magazine running articles on the muscleman epics about five years ago, often under the byline of Stephen Flaccasser. When he would drop a descriptive detail about the size of a man's nipple, of the development of a certain actor's arms, chest, legs and ass as recorded in a series of movies, I felt he was the greatest film writer in the business. No other movie mag covered the

scene this well, and I subscribed so as to get every issue.

Then, suddenly, you dropped Flaccasser and the entire topic. Why? I let my sub run out, but I swear I'll renew if you run articles and photos from these classic erotic films. I can't believe I'm the only lover of this genre, and I think you made an error dropping a hot topic.

Mighty Joe Hung
Oakland, CA

(Okay, pal. It's time to put your \$30 where your mouth is. You'll notice some new and different sword n' sandal items in the video review section this issue, by Stephen Flaccasser and others. We are reviving the topic. I've been conference calling with young Mr. Flaccasser, and he's planning a series of additional text for next issue. Also, we've talked about doing a full book-a-zine on the subject in the near future. Get a good grip on your lance, and be ready for a thrill ride back to the 1960's; of tortures endured and heroic deeds performed by musclebound men dripping with olive oil in front of the wide-screen Italian camera lens. I'll expect your subscription check by return mail. MC)

Send your letters of comment to: Cult Movies, PO Box 1047, Hollywood CA 90078.

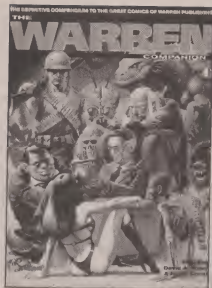
Then watch for them on these pages next time.

PHANTOM VIDEO



UNCUT/UNCENSORED Horror, sleaze, cult & sexploitation imports, rarities & bizarre films on VHS
Psychedelic & X-Rated erotic horror.
S&M, infamous & obscure imports
For our updated catalog send \$3 to

PHANTOM VIDEO
Dept C, P O Box 7301
Jupiter, FL 33468



*did you read these
magazines as a kid?*

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND

MONSTER WORLD

SPACEMEN

SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED

EERIE

VAMPIRELLA

*then read the story
behind them in:*

THE WARREN COMPANION

THE ULTIMATE REFERENCE GUIDE TO WARREN PUBLISHING

In this 272-page, heavily-illustrated book, read how publisher James Warren, with help from the likes of editor Forrest J Ackerman, created a youth-oriented publishing empire.

Book includes:

- * New painted cover by Alex Horley
- * A definitive Warren checklist
- * Dozens of features and interviews

CULT MOVIES
MAGAZINE

P.O. Box 1047
Hollywood, CA 90078

Mail to:

Yeah, I'd like:

☐ **SOFTCOVER**
\$35

Limited Edition (1000 Copies)

☐ **HARDCOVER**

\$57 *Signed by Jim Warren*

*16 Extra Pages!
A Wrightson Plate!*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

FREE SHIPPING AND HANDLING!

Make check or money order payable to CULT MOVIES

JAMES WARREN: "A Friend For Life!"

Special Guest Commentary: Verne Langdon



James Warren & Verne Langdon

My nearly 40-year Friendship with Jim Warren goes all the way back to 1964 when I was co-owner of **Dan Post Studios**. I had unwittingly (but nonetheless illegally!) "borrowed" the "MONSTERS" part of the registered, copyrighted **FAMOUS MONSTERS** logo for our monthly **Genii the Conjurors Magazine** ad, in which we were presenting the **Dan Post Studios Monsters**, which included *Dracula*, *Frankenstein's Monster*, *The Mummy*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Mr. Hyde*, and *The Wolfman* (\$8.95 each). As an avid **FM** reader ever since #1 "The Collector's Edition" hit the stands in 1958, I felt our masks would be a welcome addition to the popular magazine's **Captain Company** mail order department. (I remember that first cover: Jim Warren, himself, was wearing a **Dan Post** "over-the-head, borrowed personality" green \$3.95 *Frankenstein* Monster mask and tux, and Marlon Maare was wearing glossed fire-engine red lipstick and a very snug-fitting and nicely-low-

cut black cocktail dress!) Anyway, when our ad with the eye-catching header broke in **Genii**, I had a bunch of flier-copies of it made up, and sent them out to novelty and costume shops everywhere. I also sent one to the publisher of **Famous Monsters of Filmland** magazine, one James Warren, whom I had never met in my life.

A week or so later, I received a personal letter from the very same Mr. James Warren, Publisher of **Famous Monsters of Filmland** magazine, succinctly explaining to me that he had always wanted to own a mask company, and inasmuch as I had violated certain United States copyright laws by "borrowing" his magazine's logo for our ad, his attorneys would be seeing us in court. Then he added (much to my relief), that if I wanted to avoid such a confrontation, I should contact Ben Taubman, the **Captain of the Captain Company**, and make arrangements to sell our masks in the magazine.

After I changed into a dry set of trousers, I post-haste telephoned Mr. Taubman (actually Jim's Father - Jim was born a Taubman), and he was very nice and we agreed to do business, and I never "borrowed" anything again, except the "Paul Muni" life mask (see the article on **Bela Lugosi's Life Mask** elsewhere in this issue).

There's no denying business with **Warren Publishing** was always very good. We sold a large volume of product through Jim's **Captain Company**. But of utmost importance to me was then - and is now - the fact Jim Warren is a man of his word. At **Warren Publishing Company** he was committed to meeting his company's financial obligations expediently, in a better-than-timely manner. He was very much "in charge" of **Warren Publishing Company**, and ran a tight ship, dedicated to turning out the very finest publications that his readers money could buy. He was (and remains to this day) always ready to help in any way possible. Little wonder we embarked upon an etched-in-granite-on-going friendship that continues to this very day. The most recent time I saw Jim and his dear friend Gloria Goldberg in person, they came out from Philadelphia in August of '98 to do a convention in San Diego, then rode the train all the way up the California coast to Montecito to stay with me for an incredible get-together. We talk on the phone frequently, and communicate by email and snail-mail continually. Jim is tons of fun to know; he was a Major Influence in the *Monster Revolution*, and today he is a Major Influence to a number of people; I'm so lucky to be among them.

And I'm so happy he has authorized the book, just published, which details the output of his creative years in the magazine field. **The Warren Companion** is a reference guide which shows the pioneering efforts of my friend; and how for decades, he created the trends which other publishers followed. I was sent an autographed copy the moment it left the printing press, and thoroughly endorse it. Any fan reading these words will be enthralled by the contents of this astounding new book.---

BARBARA PAYTON

BY
JOHN O'DOUD

*Ah, we judge each other harshly,
Knowing not life's hidden force:
Knowing not the fount of action
Is much less turbid at its source*

*Serving not around the coal
All the golden grains of good,
Oh, we'd love each other better
If we only understood.*—Author Unknown

At first the sanitation workers thought it was a bag of trash. It was only when the two men got a closer look did they realize that what they had thought was just another piece of garbage scattered beneath the Dumpster they had come to empty, was in reality the body of a woman lying on her side. The location was a small, vacant parking lot hidden behind a group of stores on Sunset Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue, in the heart of Hollywood. The Dumpster, and two others that were nearby, faced Fairfax and serviced a Thrifty Drugstore, an A & P supermarket and The Brush Wave Beauty Shop. Although Los Angeles is known for its temperate climate, at 5:30 a.m. in February, the chilly air will typically hover somewhere near the 45 degree mark. Despite this, the woman was clad only in a thin, cotton shift and a pair of slippers, and with the smudge of dried blood caked thick around her nose and upper lip, she appeared, at first glance, to be dead. Standing over her, the garbage men could see that an ugly mass of old bruises and welts covered her arms and legs—like purple ink-blots, vivid, even in the subdued light of dawn. With two inches of dark roots fighting their way through a brassy, blonde mess, her hair was bunched in knots atop her head, like some tangled bee's nest gone awry. So battered was her appearance that it made it almost impossible to determine what she actually looked like underneath all the layers of dried blood and dirt. One of the men later said that the sight of her crumpled body lying on the pavement of that empty parking lot, made it appear as if she had been, "dumped out of the sky." When at last they noticed that she was still breathing, the two workers rushed to get help.

Later that morning, word spread quickly down Sunset Boulevard and all across town that the woman the men had found was none other than Barbara Payton, former movie star and tabloid queen—and a longtime denizen of Hollywood's Skid Row. Those who remembered the name were not surprised, for despite the fact that her film career had ended 12 years earlier—in a blaze of sordid scandal and poisonous publicity—Payton had never really left

Hollywood—at least not for long. When she had ventured away from its bright lights for two years in the mid 1950's, to live among a herd of seaside peasants on the coast of Mexico, the experience proved so disastrous she had come crawling back to town, leaving a trail of empty booze bottles and busted dreams in her wake. But instead of finding cheering crowds and klieg lights awaiting her return, she had found only silence and shadows. Her metaphoric plunge from the top of the famed Hollywood sign, into the bowels of L.A.'s back streets and alleyways, had brought her to where she was now: lying in a contorted heap beneath a mound of rotting trash.

When Barbara Payton was found beside the garbage Dumpster in February 1967, she had spent the last decade of her life in a self-imposed prison that spanned a 20 to 25-block radius of Hollywood—an area roughly the size of New York City's Central Park. Hidden somewhere among the town's gloss and tinsel, she figured, were the remnants of who she once was—and what she had—and if she looked hard enough—she could surely reclaim all that she had lost. But, by the time Payton landed unconscious in that Sunset Boulevard parking lot, she had long since bypassed Hollywood's gloss and tinsel, and had instead found herself laid to waste on a sad, lonely



road of physical, mental and emotional ruin. That she had managed to survive the previous ten years of her life had simply amazed those who knew of the unrelenting hell she had endured.

Barbara Payton's many desperate attempts to embrace the dream of Hollywood delivered her instead to its darkest and ugliest corners. Few others have fallen from its opulence to its squalor in such rapid and complete fashion, and fewer still, with the absolute determination she possessed, to completely self-destruct. When taking into consideration the many enemies she made during her twenty years in *The Land of Lost Dreams*, it is somehow ironic that she would be found lying beneath a trash bin—for Barbara Payton truly had been chewed up by the Hollywood machine, and then spit out like so much garbage. In the gray dawn of that February morning in 1967, Payton was fast approaching her final exit. The path that led her to this place of such utter solitude and inner desolation had begun 39 years earlier, in a small, Midwestern town—2,000 miles, and a thousand lifetimes, away.

It was amid the towering pines and cold winds of Cloquet, Minnesota, that Barbara Lee Redfield was born on November 19, 1927. She was an infant of tremendous beauty, says longtime Cloquet resident Mildred Golden, who as a child remembers a baby "...with hair so blonde it was almost snow-white, and the deepest, most beautiful blue eyes." Her parents, Erwin Lee (nicknamed "Hip" by family and friends), a construction worker, and Mabel, a housewife, were middle-class, blue-collar types, and by all known accounts, Barbara and her younger brother Frank had a decidedly average childhood. Several former neighbors of hers—all contemporaries of Barbara—recall a "bright, outgoing and athletic little girl" who seemed to derive a great deal of enjoyment from the state's many wintertime activities, including ice skating, skiing and sledging. "I loved the winters," she later wrote of her childhood in Cloquet. "The cold, crisp Minnesota winters, with a blue-black sky at night and a billion stars you could reach up and grab by the handful. I think I made a wish on every one of those stars." Reared as a church-going, Roman Catholic in a conventional and typical small-town manner—one that practically demanded good behavior and domestic aptitude in all female family members—she took an early interest in cooking and became quite good at it by her pre-teen years. It was a skill that remained intact throughout her life, and Barbara would later relish the opportunity to whip up gourmet meals for her various beaus, husbands and friends.

As she reached her adolescence, Barbara Lee Redfield first began to experience her powerful (and seemingly, effortless) influence on the opposite sex. Years later, she would recall an incident that occurred when she was eleven or twelve, when a famous actor appeared at a war bond rally near her hometown. A starstruck Barbara claimed she got to see the celebrity only after negotiating with an older boy to get her into the auditorium. He wanted to put his hands under her blouse and "cop a feel" in exchange for the ticket, she said, but Barbara would only allow him to rest his hand between her legs. She had gotten her way, however, and the lesson she learned was obvious: bargain for what you want, then play the game, and win. It was perhaps the first in a series of trade-offs that would forever change the

course of her life.

In the late 1930s, the Redfield family moved to Odessa, a Texas oil town, and the teenaged Barbara soon evolved into a striking, 5'4" beauty ("with long legs like an antelope", remembers one elderly man who knew her) in contrast to her innate wholesomeness, she picked up a beazen and tough-talking persona at some



John Payton, Air Force Captain, and wife Barbara Payton

point along the way, and was easily seduced by all the male attention she attracted at Odessa High School. She later wrote that she lost her virginity at 15—to a schoolmate's 45-year old father, who had sexual relations with her in a dry bathtub in his home while the unknown guests at his surprise birthday party celebrated downstairs. Barbara never reported what was, without question, a case of statutory rape. It is particularly compelling to wonder how this highly inappropriate (not to mention illegal) occurrence may have influenced her subsequent attitudes about men—and if her future sexual habits carried with them an element of subconscious revenge against the older man who stole her innocence at 15.

During her junior year at Odessa High School, Barbara, then 16, eloped with a local boy, William Hodge, but the marriage was quickly annulled by her parents. The following year, she wore a low-cut dress to a dance at a military base and attracted the attention of a handsome, 22-year old Air Force Captain named John Payton. They were married within weeks, and Barbara—who, like so many, harbored vague dreams of movie stardom since childhood—convincing him to take her to Hollywood for their honeymoon. As enraptured as he was with his sultry young bride, Payton agreed, and once there, Barbara soaked up every bit of the town's glamorous ambience. She decided this was the place for her and amazingly

made enough contacts during her initial stay there that she obtained a screen test with RKO Studios. It didn't lead to much at first, but Barbara had her foot in the door and wasn't about to let the opportunity get away from her.

Back home, she gave birth to a son, John Lee, and—in rapid succession—ditched her husband, left her baby with her parents, and with



In England during "Four Sided Triangle"



a single suitcase, headed back to Hollywood as fast as she could. Barbara got a job as a carhop at Stan's Drive-In, on the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Highland Avenue, and used the tips she made to gain entry into the town's nightclub scene. With her sweet-but-sexy looks and her somewhat ribald sense of humor, she quickly became a popular figure at such plush Sunset Strip hot spots as Ciro's, Mocambo and the Trocadero, and was dubbed "Queen of the Nightclubs" by a local newspaper columnist. Though untrained in acting, Barbara Payton nabbed a starlet's contract with Universal Studios in late 1948 and did a few bit parts, but the studio dropped her the following summer after word got around that she was having an affair with married man Bob Hope. They had met in March 1949—at a hotel party in Houston—and Barbara became a kind of 1940's groupie, following Hope around the country for several weeks as he made personal appearances. Upon their return to Hollywood, the actor allegedly set her up in a little love-nest on Chermoya Avenue, for which he promptly purchased all the necessary furnishings (including, in the words of one tabloid, "...a king-size double bed that was the set for many rollicking good times"). The couple's sex fling, however, would last just six months—ending abruptly when Barbara began pressuring him for large amounts of money to help cover her living

expenses. Bob Hope's advisors reportedly paid her off with a handsome sum—with the stipulation that she kept quiet and disappeared. Payton happily bowed out... and went through all the cash in a matter of months. The foul-mouthed, booze-swilling, "hot-to-trot hoyden with an angel's face" quickly evolved into a hard and mercenary little number with a cunning brain. She went back to partying at Mocambo, where she was photographed over the next several months dining with billionaire Howard Hughes, huddled in a booth between movie tough guy John Ireland and mobster Mickey Cohen, and downing shots with wealthy L.A. paving contractor Jerry Bialac. Veteran B-movie actor Mickey Knox also dated Barbara during this time. In an interview with author Patrick McGillan for the book *TENDER COMRADES: A BACKSTORY OF THE HOLLYWOOD BLACKLIST* (co-authored by Paul Buhle), he recalls a compulsive and passionate lover who "kept me in bed once for three days and nights, even feeding me (there). She wouldn't let me get out of bed! I had to crawl out on my hands and knees. A helluva girl!" Payton was moving so fast she even managed a brief affair with actor George Raft, and an even shorter engagement to high-powered entertainment lawyer Greg Bautzer. Kicking up dust like a wild mustang on the loose, it's safe to say she was playing the entire field. Reminiscing about the young Payton, legendary film producer A.C. Lyles fondly recalls, "Barbara never had an itch she didn't scratch."

At 22, Barbara had her first starring role, as a doomed nightclub cigarette girl, in the well-received 1949 film noir, *TRAPPED*, with Lloyd Bridges—and her first set of unsavory headlines

his bullying ways and propensity for using strong-arm tactics. Don Cougar was just one of the many shady characters to whom an excitement-crazing Payton had gravitated. She was also running with Hollywood party girl Lila Leeds and with several members of the notorious Sica mob, and in early 1950, there were more lurid headlines when she and Cougar were called before a Federal Grand Jury in the perjury trial of their friend Stanley Adams, a heroin dealer already serving time for killing pusher-turned-informant Abe Davidian. Payton and Cougar concurred with Adams testimony that he was dining with them in Barbara's apartment at the time of the hit, but apparently their alibi were so weak and unconvincing, Adams was found guilty of perjury and remained imprisoned on the murder charge.

Barbara Payton was signed to WB Studios in 1950—at \$5,000 a week—and immediately co-starred with James Cagney in the violent crime drama, *KISS TOMORROW GOODBYE*. Playing a good girl gone bad through her association with a sadistic gangster played by Cagney (she ends up killing him after he beats her), Barbara turned in her finest screen performance. She acquiesced herself so well in the film, WB doubled her weekly salary and gave her a featured role as the conniving prize tramp "Flo," in the Gary Cooper Technicolor western, *DALLAS*. Over the years, it's been widely alleged that Payton had sexual episodes with both Cooper and another co-star, Steve Cochran, during the making of the film. A former scene-still photographer (who worked for another studio) knew Barbara in the 1950s and asserts, "I know she and Steve Cochran fooled around with each other when they were making *DALLAS*. They used to go behind the western sets on the WB back lot and grab a 'quickie'! And, she and Gary Cooper had, what I guess you might want to call,

the WB lot at hali-staff! Barbara Payton was one hot-looking and raunchy broad!"

Barbara followed her small but decorative role in *DALLAS* with the female lead in a Gregory Peck film, *ONLY THE VALIANT* (in which Army officer Peck and cavalryman Gig Young vie for her virtuous Cathy Eversham character), and once again, reportedly had a sexual fling with her leading man during its production. By this time, Payton was being squired around town by a new sugar daddy—the classy movie star, Franchot Tone, a distinguished and wealthy man twenty-two years her senior. Tone had spotted her holding court at Cuo's, and was immediately captivated by Barbara's beauty and highly irreverent nature. An ex-husband of Joan Crawford, Tone lavished daily pills of champagne, flowers and expensive jewelry on Payton—while she cooked him gourmet meals—and they were soon engaged. The debonair actor publicly announced plans to purchase a ranch for Barbara in Pomona, and with her film career ascending, it's clear that the woman whom WB had recently named "the white diamond with blue eyes" was sitting on top of the world.

As was her wont when things were running too smoothly in her life, Barbara threw monkey wrench into the proceedings when she started sneaking around with handsome Guy Madison, the co-star of her latest film, the big-budgeted Civil War drama, *DRUMS IN THE DEEP SOUTH*. Madison, then married to troubled, alcoholic actress Gail Russell, quickly fell under Payton's irresistible spell and began joining her after work in late-night dates in Barbara's new apartment. It didn't take long for Tone to get wind of his fiancée's cheating ways, and one night, while spying on her, he allegedly caught Payton and Madison in bed together. The story spread like wildfire through Hollywood and was exposed to the public in a steamy article in *CONFIDENTIAL* magazine, the top exploitation "rag" of the day. Despite her embarrassing indiscretions, Payton and Tone remained engaged, however WB Studios was not pleased with Barbara's antics and punished her by tossing her to "Poverty Row" for the now-famous cult film, *BRIDE OF THE GORILLA*.

The picture (written and directed by *THE WOLF MAN*'s illustrious Curt Siodmak and co-starring Raymond Burr and an alcohol-wrecked Lon Chaney) was your typical low-budget, jungle melodrama of the day, but Payton's appearance in it proved memorable. First seen dancing alone under a slow-moving ceiling fan, Barbara—wearing sexy espadrilles and with her shapely, hourglass figure encased in a tight sarong—looks stunning. Her near-perfect physical countenance and sensuous undulating in this scene were mesmerizing, and helped disguise the fact that the film itself was a rather trashy affair (but one, however, in which Barbara delivered an exceptionally strong acting performance). During the making of *BRIDE OF THE GORILLA*, rumors bounced around town that Barbara was carrying on in more sleazy "dressing room encounters," this time with two of the film's supporting players—aging, alcoholic Tom Conway, and black actor/ex-L.A. Rams football star Woody Strode. In a 2002 interview with author Tom Weaver, the late Herman Cohen, the film's producer stated, "Barbara Payton was a gorgeous gal, [and] she was a little crazy. She liked to laugh... and she was a fun person. (You might say) she was a whore who got lucky."



Publicity Photo for "BRIDE OF THE GORILLA"

that September when the L.A. TIMES reported that her new boyfriend, a 28-year-old movie extra (and part-time drug dealer) named Don Cougar, beat up Barbara's elderly landlady in a 3 a.m. dispute over the amount Barbara owed on her rent. With

a "dressing-room romance" This man also recalls an amusing—if pathetic—homage to Barbara's increasingly trashy reputation: "There was a story going around town at the time that the crew would celebrate the end of each day's filming by sending Payton's petticoats up a flag pole, flying them over

In July 1951, Franchot Tone was in New York City on business when Barbara attended a Hollywood pool party at the Sunset Plaza Hotel and met Tom Neal, a hard drinking, unemployed, cowboy actor who had starred some years before in the renowned film noir classic *DETOUR*. Legend has it that Barbara spotted the 37-year-old Neal on the high-diving board (sporting an impressively muscular build in a tight pair of bathing trunks) and later uttered a statement to the press that was not only unintentionally comical but also a keen example of her flighty and rather shallow romanticism: "Honey, I took just one look at him and I absolutely flipped!" she gushed. "It was love at first sight. He looked so wonderful in his trunks, I knew he was the only man in my life!" A sexually predatory Barbara Payton evidently met her male counterpart that day in the macho Tom Neal, and the couple dove headfirst into an affair. The actor's son (Tom Neal, Jr.) reveals that his father was "...intoxicated by the way Barbara acted and thought like a man. She was extremely aggressive and went after what she wanted, with absolutely no fear whatsoever. Dad said she loved playing games with men and could never get enough attention. She apparently dove the men in her life nuts and took great pride in her lovemaking skills. My father told me once that Barbara was like 'an alley cat in heat' and was always ready, willing and able to have sex at any time, anywhere." Although engaged to Franchot Tone, Payton proposed marriage to Neal and invited him to move into her lavish duplex apartment (for which Tone was paying the rent). Her neighbors later told the press that they often saw a shirtless Tom Neal working out with barbells on Barbara's patio, while she lay nearby, drinking champagne and sunbathing in the nude. When Tone returned to Los Angeles that August, Barbara did an about-face and tossed Neal aside for her wealthier fiancé.

What followed in the next few weeks were no fewer than half-a-dozen engagements to both Tone and Neal—sometimes taking place concurrently! Driven by too much booze and her active libido, Barbara devoted more and more of her time and energy into pitting her two boyfriends against one another. She announced plans to marry Neal in Las Vegas on September 14, 1951, but on the eve of their wedding, dumped him for an afternoon tryst with Franchot Tone at The Beverly Hills Hotel. Upon their return to Barbara's apartment after a night of bar-hopping, the triangle finally exploded when an enraged Tom Neal beat Tone in a bloody, pre-dawn assault on Payton's patio, leaving the older actor comatose for 18 hours and hospitalized with severe head injuries. Barbara received a black eye in a brawl that made worldwide headlines. A series of bizarre news stories followed, detailing everything from Barbara climbing the hospital's outside fire escape to visit her battered boyfriend, to her bringing him shakers of ice-cold martinis, "...to help soothe his nerves." In the staid social climate engendered by the McCarthy "witch hunts", Payton's free-wheeling lifestyle shocked America's bourgeois sensibilities and the press responded by crucifying her in print. The dust had barely settled on the row when late WB president Jack L. Warner invoked the dictates found in the morals clause of her film contract and immediately dropped her from the studio's roster. A.C. Lyles



TOM NEAL KNOCKS OUT TONE IN LOVE FIST FIGHT

Col 40th Division Won't Be Sent to Korea

Robert Payton
Involved Also
Beat or Lost

HERALD EXPRESS
Beat or Lost

Western News
Daren Foster
Beat or Lost



Box 3 to Arm West Germany

remembers Barbara telling him, "I know I'm getting bad publicity, A.C., but I couldn't care less. I'm havin' so much fun!" Though she and Franchot Tone wed after his release from the hospital, the marriage was an alcohol-fueled nightmare that ran amok in just 53 days when Barbara walked out on him and returned to Tom Neal.

A highly-publicized reconciliation several weeks later at the Warwick Hotel in New York City ended disastrously following a fiery argument in which Tone reportedly discovered Payton talking to Neal on the telephone, and responded by throwing Barbara's jewelry box out the 15th floor window of their hotel suite. The high-pitched drama continued with Barbara swinging the phone at her husband's head, nearly hurting him, and then locking herself in the bedroom where she swallowed a handful of Seconal. Barbara's bungled attempt at suicide was resolved in an extremely messy fashion with an emetic administered by the hotel doctor. The circus-like atmosphere surrounding his marriage to "Hollywood's Hell-Raising Husky" finally convinced Franchot Tone that he had had enough. He divorced Barbara in July 1952, using some sensational photographs taken by a Hollywood private detective to prove his allegations of infidelity. The photos, shot through the transom of a seedy Sunset Strip motel room, showed Payton (naked but for a black garter belt and beads) engaging in oral sex with Neal. Incensed and vengeful over this latest betrayal, Tone made dozens of duplicates of the shots and then distributed them around Hollywood in sealed, unmarked envelopes, hoping the sexually explicit images would destroy Barbara's chances of getting any future film work. The Tone/Payton divorce suit found Barbara once again being paid off to disappear, much like she was in the Bob Hope affair. She reportedly received a "cash

consideration that was satisfactory" in the settlement, and subsequently moved into a beautiful, 15-room mansion (with servants) in Beverly Hills.

Now objects of intense ridicule, Payton and Neal high-tailed it out of town and traveled to England, where she had star billing in the B-film *BAD BLONDE* (a dismal melodrama that found Barbara camping it up as a sex-crazed murderer) and the Terence Fisher-directed sci-fi yawn, *FOUR-SIDED TRIANGLE*. Neither film furthered her standing in the business. After five months abroad, Payton and Neal returned to Hollywood in December, with Barbara sporting a (faux) British accent, "...so thick, the Duke of Windsor might have envied it!" (as acid-tongued gossip maven Shirlah Graham reported in her column). In her newly acquired—and just as quickly cast aside—British cant, Barbara formally announced that Tom Neal had taken over the management of her career, and vowed that she would only be accepting, in her words, "...really strong film roles." Later that month, Payton obviously relented when she donned a cave girl outfit and co-starred with Sonny Tufts, another alcohol-soaked performer on a career slide, in a ridiculous comedy entitled *RUN FOR THE HILLS* (JACK BRODER PRODUCTIONS). Directed in broad, slapstick style by B-Movie war-horse Lew Landers (*THE RAVEN*, *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE*), the film's banal plot concerns an insurance actuary's paranoia over what he believes to be an impending nuclear holocaust, and his attempts to escape it by moving into a desert mine with his wife. Peppered with walk-ons from several lower-rung, if dependable, performers like Jean Willes, Richard Benedict and Byron Foulger, *RUN FOR HILLS* had the look and ambience of a

Three-Stooges short, minus the charm and energy. A tired, old vaudeville sketch in search of an audience. It went the way of Barbara's two previous films. *Slaughter* to the bottom-half of double bills across the country.

Neal and Payton, both appearing wrecked and disoriented from too many late nights carousing on the Sunset Strip, wound up next at Lippert Studios, where they acted in a dreary, bottom-of-the-barrel western, *THE GREAT JESSE* (JAMES RAID) (Barbara, her tumid body packed into a light vest and jeans, had the part of a tough, bawdy, saloon singer). Commenting on Payton's by-now weathered appearance, the film's producer, Bob Lippert, Jr., says, "To tell you the truth, I honestly didn't think Barbara was all that attractive...not at that point, anyway. She wasn't a real looker, like Rita Hayworth was, for instance. But she was a race person. Not a snob or anything like that, just a real down-to-earth, small-town kind of girl. But one, I might add, with a load of problems."

In June of '53, Barbara and Tom toured the U.S. in a quickly shipped together summer stock production of *THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE*. During the play's opening-night performance at the Drury Lane Theater in Chicago, Barbara allegedly went on stage intoxicated, and passed out in Neal's arms. Revived moments later only to collapse again, she was finally carried offstage and brought to a local hospital for observation. The doc finished the tour in a series of dead-end, backwater towns—where there came rumors that Tom Neal was physically beating Barbara—and in late 1953, their sadomasochistic relationship finally dissolved in a violent storm of booze and fights. (In the mid 1960s, Neal was accused and convicted of shooting his third wife to death in a jealous rage, and spent 7 years in a California prison.)

In the wake of her well-publicized split with Tom Neal, Barbara hit the town fast and hard. During this time, she dyed the front half of her platinum blonde hair a flaming red color, drew buxom-looking tattoos on her face and became a nightly bachelorette fixture at such local spots as Chasen's, LaRue's, and the Cook and Bull Bar. Bedecked in her finest jewelry and furs, Barbara was always friendly, frequently drunk, and repeatedly pelk—of ever-went home alone. Veteran celebrity interviewer Skip E. Lowe says, "By this time, she was pretty much 'damaged goods.' She had gotten into really wild behavior (like) picking up strange guys in gas stations and in two-bit lounges up and down the Pacific Coast Highway. Barbara frequently stayed at the Carden d'Allah on Sunset, and there were rumors that she was propositioning all the young bellboys at the hotel and taking them back to her bungalow." Payton's libertine lifestyle was hot copy, and local journalists began referring to her in the gossip columns as "Glitterville's Top Teeny"—that is, when not running wild items on her more sensational escapades. She was still maintaining a high profile on the Hollywood party circuit and was dating celebrities—married and unmarried, openly and secretly—in a somewhat frantic display of activity. While vacationing in Las Vegas, she bedded hotel kidnaped (and soon-to-be movie Tarzan) Gordon Scott. A 6'3" Adams with 19" biceps and curly hair, Scott was ripe for the picking. He later recalled, "An exciting roll-in-the-bay Barbara hadn't gone completely around the bend yet, she still 'had it.' She was hot."

Barbara was delighted when one of her suitors, a well-known film star, bought her a brand new, \$6,000 Cadillac convertible for "services rendered." "The second time he came back, I asked him what he was going to give me this time," she later wrote. "He got me out and I never spoke to him again. Enough of memories. They hurt." In 1953, it was reported that she took up with

notorious playboy Serge Rubenstein, widely known at the time as a "high-class bum" and womanizer whose list of conquests included many Hollywood actresses. (Soon after his affair with Payton ended, Rubenstein was the victim of a homicide that for many years remained unsolved.) Barbara was no longer very particular in her choice of companions and went from stimulus to hit player to gigolo, generously bestowing her favors on all. Cynics on the pensive and nihilist as often as she was with Hollywood celebrities, Barbara was cutting a male-wild swath through a town that was using her like a rose quicker than she was using it. Barbara Payton's name once again made outrageous front page headlines in May 1954 when it was alleged that she gave two of her fur coats (valued at over \$12,000) to the owner of a downtown Los Angeles tavern—in exchange for the dismissal of a \$200 bar tab she owed! Legendary cinematic bad girl and genre film icon Yvette Vicars recalls meeting Barbara that year in a Hollywood restaurant, and remembers being deeply saddened by what she learned about Barbara's current lifestyle. "I was 16 and dating Norman Levin, who was then the CEO of Thrifty Drugs (the well-known drug store chain at whose Sunset Boulevard location Barbara's unbecoming body would later be found)," recalls Vicars. "He and I were dining at this nice restaurant in town when Barbara came in alone and sat at the bar. Norman knew Barbara and introduced us. I can't begin to tell you just how stunning she looked that night. Barbara Payton was, without question, one of the most gorgeous women I've ever seen! She also seemed like a very warm, friendly person, but sort of preoccupied and sad. Soon after Barbara arrived, a man came in and sat down next to her, and after about five minutes, they left together. I remember Norman telling me that the man was a well-known drug dealer in Hollywood and that he had heard from quite a few people in town that Barbara was using heroin and that this guy was her supplier. I was absolutely shocked."

As their lifestyles were appreciably different, Yvette Vicars had no way of knowing that Barbara's substance abuse had, in fact, started several years prior to their meeting. The truth is, she had been using illegal drugs pretty regularly since the late 40s, when she was the main squeeze of L.A. dope pusher Don Cougar, and a frequent escort of play-boy-turned-junkie Stanley Adams. From smoking pot to popping speed (which she used almost daily to keep her weight down), to her constant use of sleeping pills, and now, to shooting heroin, Payton had traveled down that long, winding road 1950's Janis called, "the route." However, as Vicars notes, Barbara's starling looks had yet to be permanently affected by her destructive habits. "I can't understand it, Barbara was still very beautiful. It's just mind-boggling to me that despite looking so gorgeous and healthy, she was actually using heroin! But, in a way, I suppose it makes perfect sense. The town had completely turned its back on her by then, and that had to have made her very depressed. What happened to Barbara is just so sad." Yvette Vicars adds that she never again saw the real 'live girl' after their one brief meeting in the summer of 1954.

The following year, Barbara's last motion picture was released, an undated film now entitled *MURDER IS MY BEAT*, directed by cult movie maverick Edgar G. Ulmer. Barbara was totally convincing as a pale nightclub singer and convicted killer who joins forces with a hard-boiled cop (played by Paul Langton) to try and prove her innocence. Though Payton performed well in the piece, it was not a success, and her arched eyebrows screeched to a halt. That same year, Barbara took a new lover—a Mark man from the other side of town who made his presence known to her neighbors by moaning through the grounds of her suspicious Beverly Hills estate on a motorcycle. Barbara continued thumping her

now at convention by moving him into her home and orchestrating the couple's splashy arrivals at several Hollywood parties. Her reckless flouting of their banished relationship aroused the industry's fury and drew the final nail into a career that was already mortally wounded.

Carlo Fiore, a struggling L.A. screenwriter (and recovering heroin addict), was making a studio apartment in Payton's post house at the time, and in his 1974 memoir of his close friendship with Marlon Brando, entitled *BUD: THE BRANDO I KNEW*, he recalls "...riding down Sunset Boulevard in Barbara's red Cadillac convertible with her and her friend, a Las Vegas showgirl named Mickey (two gorgeous lookalikes)." In the book, Fiore, a confute artist, tells of wandering over to the main house one day and inadvertently seeing his landlady and her new boyfriend making love on the living room floor. He also claims that Payton once propositioned him during the time he lived there, by appearing unexpectedly in his apartment at 2 a.m. and suggesting her "specialty." He writes, "Apparently she was interested only in oral sex. There was something off-center about this girl—not sexually, but in some strange fashion she seemed to drive men insane." Carlo Fiore maintains that Marlon Brando visited him often at Barbara's home during this time and says that he and Barbara watched the Academy Awards on her television the night Brando won the Oscar for his performance in *ON THE WATERFRONT*. In conclusion, Fiore laments the day when he was forced to leave the estate after only a few months, "...when Barbara's finances suddenly collapsed."

Later that year, Barbara lost her Beverly Hills mansion under a mountain of unpaid bills and was arrested that October for passing bad checks at Hollywood's LaQua Locker in order to buy books. Newspapers reported that, "A messy and double-cheated Payton was at least 40 lbs. overweight and wearing skin-tight black sweater pants and a bulging blouse when she was carted off to the police station to be booked." Once there, Barbara "mugged" for news photographers, laughing and kidding-around as if the arrest was a huge joke to her. She appeared drugged at her trial and snickered when she was fined \$100 and given a 60-day suspended jail sentence after pleading insanity. In 1956, a female gossip columnist with a lot of clout in Hollywood—a woman who hated Barbara—staged a campaign to destroy what little was left of her reputation by exposing many of the actress's character flaws in a series of scathing columns. The negative publicity that followed brought Barbara's ex-husband John Payton out of the woodwork with an accusation that she had been neglecting their 5-year old son (who had been living with her since the early part of the decade). Among Captain Payton's long list of complaints were that Barbara had routinely exposed the boy to "profane language, immoral conduct, notoriety, unwholesome activities and to moral education." An ugly, courtroom custody battle for John, followed, with the judge blasting Barbara as "an unfilial mother, not to mention a thoroughly confused and misguided young woman." Her name continued its rapid slide into the gutter when she lost custody of her son and was granted rights of unsupervised visitation only. Now 29, Barbara threw in the towel and moved to the desert town of Nogales, Arizona, where she met a 23-year old furniture salesman, George Provas—an ex-con and lustily married him the following week.

Barbara and husband #4 took off in her red Cadillac and drifted aimlessly around Mexico for a while. Low on funds, they landed on a side street in Tijuana, where they haled-up in a rundown rooming house across

from an all-night pit pit parlor. Stammering in an open cesspool with the border town's most criminal element, the couple waded away the hours drinking in a local cantina while vaguely plotting Payton's Hollywood comeback. Tiquana lost much of its raunchy allure for Barbara once the liquor well ran dry, and her wanderlust soon led her and her tagalong husband to the tiny coastal village of Kino Bay. An enclave of hotel-provided canvas shacks on the Gulf of California, the hamlet provided an isolated refuge for an emotionally bankrupt Barbara Payton. While George Provas acquired a beat-up boat and attempted an ill-fated commercial fishing business, Barbara got sunbathed and buzzed around the village—a barefoot beachcomber in a bikini top and blue jeans. In a ludicrous scenario straight out of a Ross Hunter stage opera, Provas wheeled and dealed to get his alcoholic wife a singing gig in a rowdy, waterfront bar—where the fallen star (clad in a rented gown and accompanied by a barefoot piano player) performed a selection of mellow torch songs. A wobbly and glassy-eyed Payton stammered among a boisterous, pawing crowd of hard hands and fishermen, and most likely received its lastest burst of attention. However, the gig quickly bit the dust when Barbara started showing up for work too drunk to perform. Beske and drowning in rapturous whiskey, the couple began arguing—each blaming the other for their mounting misfortunes. A fed-up Barbara left Kino Bay and George Provas and in 1938 invaded the desert resort of Palm Springs, where she hoped to change her luck and land herself... “a big one.” Bob Lippert, Jr. remembers seeing her one evening, sitting at the bar at the Palm Springs Riviera Hotel. Old friends from her days at Palm Pictures, Barbara and her former boss spoke only briefly. “It was obvious to me she wasn’t there to socialize,” says Lippert. “Barbara looked terrible—very coarse and haggard and heavily made-up. I looked at her hands, and there was dirt under her fingernails. I remember thinking, ‘What happened to this girl?’ Later that night, the bartender told me that Barbara was working out of the hotel bar as a \$100 a night hooker.” Shaking his head in disbelief, Bob Lippert adds, “Barbara blew it. She had everything going for her, the world at her feet... and she blew it.”

Barbara's stay at the Palm Springs Riviera was short-lived, as her hard and puffy appearance prevented her from obtaining much trade in a town overflowing with beautiful women. Once hotel management heard about her tax-free business venture, she was promptly escorted from the premises. Like the proverbial phoenix, Barbara rose from the ashes of her latest disaster and hitched a ride north in the hot, desert winds. A modern-day prairie harlot wandering the Wild West, she touched down in Nevada, seeking solace for a while in the dusty gambling town of Searchlight, located several miles outside Las Vegas near the California border. Barbara dated a gambler with mob ties (a man she distinctly refers to in her autobiography as “Dick Fortune”). In order to survive, she again turned tricks—though this time not in the lush environment of the Palm Springs Riviera, but in a tiny, furnished apartment over a casino. For Barbara, it was a long way from Beverly Hills to what surely seemed the loneliest spot on earth. Searchlight and “Dick Fortune” ultimately proved to be little more than momentary blurs on Payton's twisted road map of sinners. Within months, she was back on the road—with Hollywood, again, her destination.

In August 1938, at 33, a revitalized Barbara Payton appeared in Reno and called a press conference to announce her divorce from George Provas, and to put the word out that she was officially resuming her acting career. Tanned, then and looking stylish in a tailored suit, she had managed somehow to pull herself together to face the openly hostile men of the fourth estate. Sitting on a

tiny table with her skirt-bunched up, Barbara handily dodged the reporters' more acerbic barbs and pushed the cheeseburger quotient for all it was worth. When asked by one journalist what had brought her back to Hollywood, her response was fatuous, at best. To a round of derisive and rib-poking laughter, Barbara waived her movie-star surgicuts, crossed her legs and declared, “The ants in my pants were crawling again!”

William Ramage, a handsome young actor working in Hollywood in the late 1930's, met Payton that fall at an elegant dinner party hosted by her longtime attorney, Milton Golden and his wife, Charlene. As a testimony to Barbara's amazing and almost miraculous resilience, Ramage recalls “a lovely, classy and, above all, sober lady who prepared a fabulous meal for Milt and Charlene's guests and moved among the group as if she was ‘the mayor here!’ Barbara had the most luscious, crystal-blue eyes, and the way she looked to my every word while making constant eye contact with me was absolutely mesmerizing! In fact, she listened to me so intently that night, you would think I knew the secrets of the ages! I tell you, that beautiful, wide-eyed gaze of hers would melt any man's heart!” The only downside to the evening, says Bill Ramage, was Milton Golden's rather firm insistence that Barbara attempt to find work outside the film industry—and her equally firm (and unrelenting) dismissal of the idea. “Barbara was determined to re-establish herself as an actress in Hollywood,” the performer-turned banker asserts. “I remember her telling Milt that she didn't want to do anything else with her life as she felt she wasn't qualified to do anything else. Milt and Charlene—who were both very fond of Barbara—were absolutely beside themselves! You know, although she was always very kind to me, Barbara could also be quite willful and defiant. She also had this uncanny way of ‘mentally blocking-out’ other people's anger with her almost like she didn't notice, or it didn't exist. Barbara would listen attentively to all the good advice Milt and Charlene gave her, and then go right ahead and get herself in trouble again. But she always did it with such ‘such innocence!’” Ramage recalls a sympathetic Charlene Golden and another dinner guest, wealthy society matron Evelyn Siebbins, giving Payton “gifts of money and clothing” that night.

Unfortunately, Barbara's plans for a film comeback died aborning. Despondent over her inability to land a single new acting job in Hollywood, the following year found Payton once again on a downwind path. With her pride completely shattered, she took a

series of low-paying jobs—working as a cocktail waitress in a seedy strip joint, then as a shampoo girl in a West Hollywood beauty shop, even pumping gas for a while on Hollywood Boulevard. Her ever-lowering ties to the motion picture industry remained tenuous, at best. A lonely and moose Barbara would often accept visits from a few old-timers she had known from her days at Universal and WB—hard-drinking, third-rate cowboy actors and failed bit-part players, who were, in Barbara's words, “mad for my big bosom and womanly form!” Payton, in turn, welcomed the camaraderie of other out-of-work show folk and appreciated their modest lavors. Swapping stories in her grumpy duthin over shots of cheap booze, she and her guests would gaze out the window at the squalid streets below, and recall their long-lost glory days. But all the bawdy memories and forced laughter in the world couldn't keep Barbara's plummeting morale afloat. Each night, as the shadows turned to darkness over Hollywood, she tilted the Venetian blinds on the windows of her room, and with her pride hardly lit in a flashing neon from the street lights below, Barbara shed her clothes for liquor and raw misery. Frustrated that she had been barred from making the comeback she had hoped for, she quickly upped her alcohol intake, gained back the weight she lost, and watched her beauty disappear this time, for good. Tailored suits and bikinis soon gave way to lumpy culottes and dressing gowns she left on for days. Finally rendered unemployable—and destitute—due to her alcoholism, Barbara at last gave-up the fight and descended on the streets of Hollywood.

By 1940, Barbara Payton found herself hopelessly adrift on a sea of liquor in an after midnight world of seedy dives and back street bars. Long gone were the plush suites and sculpted gardens she'd once known at the Beverly Hills Hotel—replaced now by filthy, flea-bitten motel rooms overlooking asphalt courtyards in downtown L.A. Gone, too, were the fancy dinner dates at Ciro's that ended in some movie star's posh bedroom and luxurious four-poster bed—replaced now by sexual encounters on vice, they played like scenes lifted from the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch. Barbara had killed into the underbelly of an inner-city slum pit—and straight into her own Hell On Earth. With her platinum-blond hair bleached white, and her lips and fingernails painted the color of blood crimson, a bleated Barbara Payton was often seen driving up and down the Sunset Strip in her rusted, red convertible, chasing for “dates.” As her exquisite Nordic beauty continued to erode under the



Above: Barbara Payton at Malibu Beach in May 1952

annual of her constant drinking, she watched her asking price decline, from \$100 to \$40, and finally—pathetically—to \$5 a tick. She became a willing—some say, eager—participant of the “five-minute, five-dollar date” quick encounters on Sunset Boulevard for live bucks a throw, in cars packed with their motorists running. The woman who once earned \$10,000 a week as a bona fide Hollywood movie star, was still in Hollywood, dispensing crude, coarse sex—where the names and histories of her dates were neither discussed nor required. Barbara would frequently have sex with these men, and in her confused and heavy-lidded haze, forget to collect any money from them afterward. She had entered the Devil's Lair and stood helpless as the darkness of that world swallowed her whole.

On February 7, 1962, Barbara was busted for prostitution when she approached an undercover cop on a bar on Sunset Boulevard and invited him to her apartment for sex. Reporters from the L.A. TIMES were waiting to photograph her arrival at the police station, and the rather startling images they caught that night show a life completely out-of-control. Clad in a secondhand mink coat, and with her sad, doe eyes resembling those of a hunted animal that had been cornered, Payton appears drawn, dazed, and “spaced-out”—and nothing like the serious starlet she had once been. Though far away and glazed over, her eyes that night held the reflection of a million faded dreams.

By August 1962, worldwide glamour icon Marilyn Monroe was dead. This occurrence—shocking, yet in retrospect, inevitable—likely pushed Barbara's own self-destructive mode into advanced overdrive. With the passing of our premier sex goddess, Barbara was reminded not only of her own mortality, but also of how much the eternally-beloved Monroe had meant to the world, at-large—and of how little she had amounted to. It's clearly evident that following Marilyn Monroe's death, Barbara's litany of woes only worsened as the rushed heading toward what seemed to be an inescapable and welcomed destiny.

Payton, 35, resurfaced in the headlines that summer with her complaint that she had been beaten and raped in a vacant lot by a gang of teenage thugs. Accompanied by her witness, a middle-aged man in a bolo tie whom the police report described as, “a diaper distributor and companion of the victim,” a heavyset Barbara arrived at the Windsor Hills police station, reeking of booze and wearing only a bathing suit, a sweater and a pair of gold slippers. She was reportedly covered with bruises and human bite marks, and was missing several front teeth. No arrests were ever made in an attack the newspapers would only call “a mystery beating.” The next day her name made the papers again when she was found passed-out on a bus stop bench on

Sunset Boulevard. Barbara, barfiest, and in the same whole bathing suit, was, according to news accounts, “incoherent and in an agitated state when awakened” and was arrested for public drunkenness. Incredibly another arrest followed a week later when she threw a wild, afternoon party in her apartment—while naked—and tussled with two police officers when they

NOT ASHAMED, was a muddled and unattractive piece of junk that did little to counteract Barbara's emotional and financial troubles. The book was published in 1963 to minimal public reception, but did receive some criticism from industry observers, many of whom had little sympathy for a life they believed Barbara had actively chosen. Following a brief blast of noise, it sank without a trace.

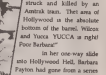
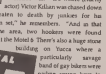
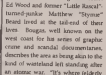
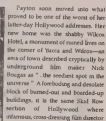
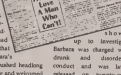
Payton soon moved into what proved to be one of the worst of her latter-day Hollywood addresses. Her new home was the shabby Wilcox Hotel, a monument of squalor lives on the corner of Yucca and Wilcox—an area of town described cryptically by underground film maker Nick Boggs as “the seediest spot in the universe.” A foreboding and desolate block of burned-out and boarded-up buildings, it is the same Skid Row section of Hollywood where infamous, cross-dressing film director Ed Wood and former “Little Rascal” turned-junkie Matthew “Stymie” Beard lived at the tail-end of their lives. Boggs, well known on the west coast for his series of graphic crime and scandal documentaries, describes the area as being akin to the kind of wasteland left standing after an atomic war. “It's where (elderly actor) Victor Killian was chased down

and beaten to death by junkies for his television set,” he remembers. “And in that very same area, two hookers were found beheaded at the Hotel S. There's also a huge stone building on Yucca where a particularly savage band of gay bums were riding young boys to commode wooden torture beds in the basement. And that was the last place I saw local punk rock legend El Duce of The Mentors frolicking with a group of homeless winos just prior to his being struck and killed by an Amtrak train. That area of Hollywood is the absolute bottom of the barrel, Wilcox and Yucca. YUCCA is right. Poor Barbara!”

In her one-way slide into Hollywood Hell, Barbara Payton had gone from a series of hot-sheet models on the Strip, to a ghetto flophouse in whose shadowy corridors rats

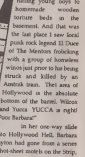
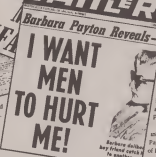
scampered beneath piles of trash. Early, the former star of such horror fare as BRIDE OF THE GORILLA and FOUR-SIDED TRIANGLE had ended up in a real-life House of Horrors—the kind of place where guests hide behind double-locked doors and fornicate to a street symphony of wailing police sirens and screams-in-the-night. Whatever memories of orchids and moonlight Barbara had held on to through the years, now completely disassembled behind the crumbling walls of an inner-city inferno.

While living at the ominous Wilcox Hotel, Barbara began a brief affair with a down-and-out TV character actor named John Rayburn. An ex-Marine



showed up to investigate. Barbara was charged with drunk and disorderly conduct and was later released on twenty-one dollars bail.

In keeping with her ongoing flirtation with catastrophe, things got even worse in the fall of 1962 when Barbara was knifed by one of her johns and received thirty-eight stitches for the stab wound. (“Thirty-eight stitches from my fleshy belly down,” is how she put it after observations were downright chalking in their apathy. “It isn’t very close to me, but I think it happened in a cinder block shanty, somewhere in the Valley.” Some fifty drunk got mad at me when I wouldn’t do “what he wanted.” Guess I gotta be more careful in the future.” After news of the incident spread through Hollywood, a paperback publisher named Leo Gold tracked Barbara down to autograph her memoirs for a book project. Unfortunately, the resulting “autobiography,” titled I AM



narrant who earned a Purple Heart for injuries sustained while fighting the Japanese on the island of Saipan during World War II, the Chicago-bred Rayburn had amassed over 300 television credits during the fledgling medium's golden years in the 50s, but by the early 1960s he'd fallen on hard times. "I was a drunk," he says now. "A lying, shoving, no-good son of a bitch, hooked on cheap cigarettes and 151 rum. For several months, Barbara and I holed up in that godforsaken Wilcox dump where we drank all day, screwed, wrote poems and talked about religion. I laid around on my ass like a bum while she turned tricks to support us. I remember the room smelling like booze, dirty bodies and even dirtier sex. Real raw life, huh?"

Countless madnights later, an unflinchingly candid John Rayburn recalls, "Barbara thought she deserved everything bad that had happened to her in her life. She believed all those things the papers had always said about her—that she was this wicked, evil woman—and she wanted to punish herself. By then, it was all about her carrying on in a sleazy and demeaning way in order to reinforce her feelings of self-hatred. And she seemed desperate for attention, any kind of attention (good or bad), just as long as people noticed her. I can remember her sometimes standing at the window of our room and pulling off her top to display her breasts to all the people down on the street. And we'd both laugh about it! I mean, is that stupid, or what? Barbara once told me that Hollywood had used her all up, and then when it was all faded with her, threw her out to the curb, 'like yesterday's trash.' You know, over the years there have been a lot of bad things that have been said about Barbara Payton—and granted, she often showed a terrible lack of judgment—but I think it's important to let people know that she was an extremely intelligent person who just gave up. Barbara had a lot of problems and was quite cynical by the time she came into my life, but she had a good heart [pause]. I loved her." John Rayburn's short-lived affair with Payton was obviously doomed from the start and he eventually left her behind at the Wilcox Hotel and found a far better life, away from show business and Hollywood (he has been in recovery from his alcoholism since 1976). "On this day what happened to Barbara still haunts me," he says, ruefully. "I remember her telling me once, 'My life is so messed up and I don't know what to do.' How I wish now that I could have helped her."

Following the end of her association with John Rayburn, Barbara continued her journey through a kind of twilight world with each passing day grew ever darker and more surreal. Finding herself firmly entrenched in a boneyard of boulevard psychosis and deliriums, Barbara watched an endless stream of bodies cut a path to her bed in a gray, featureless parade. A human receptacle for the worst kind of sexual acts imaginable, she handled it by drinking non-stop until she was nearly comatose. The regressive continued when she was picked up for shoplifting an outfit from a clothing store, and arrested again for prostitution. Then, in 1968, 38-year old Barbara turned a dark corner in her ever-present downward spiral when she was jailed on drug charges. Clad only in a men's pajama top, she was seen stumbling down a hallway at The Hollywood-Palms Motel and was later busted by an LAPD Sheriff's detective when he found drug paraphernalia in her room. Swearing profanity and appearing totally out-of-it, Barbara was charged with possession of heroin and a hypodermic syringe. Retired Lt. Joe Lesnick recalls the sad, tormented woman: "...looking very bad. That place she was staying at was a real rattrap, the worst in twenty miles. And Barbara, she was just a wreck [sic]. She was missing a lot of teeth and had numerous open sores all over her face and hands, both telltale signs of heroin abuse. Let me tell you, I was in the 'poo' a long time and I saw a lot of things, but I don't remember ever seeing anyone sink as low as Barbara Payton did." Due to "irrefragable evidence" and some swift legal maneuvering, the heroin

possession charges against Payton later mysteriously disappeared in a murky morn of red tape, allowing Barbara to once again assume her unwavering march toward disaster.

A former pin-up model and bit-player in 1950's B-film remakes witnessing the disturbing night of a party and wasted Payton staggering along Hollywood Boulevard, when—like some ghoulish, hollow-eyed specter—the "flung herself" at a pair of strangers and shocked, "Can you believe it? I'm broke. [Flat broke]!" It is perhaps symbolic that Barbara spent most afternoons cloaked in darkness, nestled in a corner nook at the Coach and Horses Bar. A solitary figure hunched over a shot glass, a string-out Barbara sat in the shadows beneath the bar's blackout drapes, and drank herself into oblivion. The bartender's son, author Robert Pezous, remembers well the lonely woman at the overcast mafioso, and describes her pitiful and shocking physical appearance in the book *O.K. YOU MUGS: WRITERS ON MOVIE ACTRESS* (Barbara Payton, A Memoir). Barbara's face displayed a perpetual surium, (with) a map of veins by her nose. The feet were very swollen and she carried an old man's pithily that sloshed faintly when she moved. She must have weighed 200 pounds." Clinging to the barest fragments of her Roman Catholic faith, Barbara kept a tiny statue of St. Jude in the pocket of her housecoats and would often take it out and talk to it—laughing one minute, and crying the next. The mid 1960s found Barbara Payton's life in ruins.

It goes without saying that America in the 1950s and early 60s was a conservative place—politically, socially and sexually. Payton's story is absolutely the worst-case scenario of what happened in that era to individuals—particularly women—who believed they could play the Hollywood game with their own set of rules, and win. Clearly, no show business tragedy more than Barbara Payton's illustrates with greater force the unforgiving wrath 'Old' Hollywood inflicted on those who challenged its cast-in-stone, unwritten code of behavior. Once she came up against the industry's top guns and revealed herself to be a rather bawdy and unrepentant woman whose unconventional lifestyle held little regard for the social norms of the day, she had been summarily dismissed from the town's loving fold. Even if her greatest sin was simply being an unabashed nonconformist on the wrong side of society's double standard, Hollywood is often a cruel and unforgiving taskmaster—especially to a strong-willed, self-assured scoundrel like Barbara Payton. One can almost imagine the town's collective pleasure at the thought of breaking her, and its satisfaction when her subsequent troubles forced her exile from the industry. It is therefore not surprising that, by the 1960s, when she desperately needed help for her addictions—and salvation from her miserable existence—there would be little help forthcoming from anyone in Hollywood. When asked what the prevailing opinion of Barbara was in those days, a film producer who was acquainted with her, rather ungraciously replied, "Look, she was a hooker with a hooker's mentality, even when she first started out. Everyone thinks Barbara turned to hooking later on in her life, but I've got news for you—she was a call girl before she started her acting career! Barbara was a sullen, heights, stick-up kid. For years I've heard, 'Tom Neal ruined her life.' He didn't ruin her life, she ruined his! Everything was always a big-ass joke to that broad. She just loved to stir up shit and it's a sin the way she 'played' both of them [Tom and Neal]. Honest to God, I can't find anything good to say about her. She was a pig, a whore who got her kicks jerking people around and was down to screwin' street bums in the end. She got everything she deserved." One strongly suspects that if asked for his opinion of the Hollywood bigwigs who wooed, dined and

bedded Barbara (many of whom were married), this gentleman's response would be infinitely less harsh and far more charitable.

Amazingly, though completely addled by her daily intake of booze and drugs, Payton still harbored dreams of returning to her old glory days. Those who saw her hitchhiking on Sunset Boulevard in the mid 1960s recall a woman consumed by an insatiable mix of bitterness, rage and hope. It was almost as if she had wrapped herself in a protective blanket of self-delusion, one that precluded any chance for honest introspection or recovery. Former burlesque entertainer Skip E. Lowe frequently spotted her pandering in town during this time and would sometimes stop to talk to her. He remembers a vengeful anger in her that was inspired by a heartbreaking fall ice insurance. "Barbara blamed Hollywood for everything that had happened to her, and was pissed off that she had been forgotten," Lowe says. "And yet, despite this, she seriously believed she could be a star again and was constantly asking for advice on how she could 'make it back to the top!'" As her former attorney, Milton Golden, once asserted, "To those who have basked in fame, anonymity must seem a form of slow death." Denying the messy self-inflicted tortures of her life, Barbara may have felt she could 'make it back', but was more truthfully courting an impending end. Blinked, perhaps, the end to her misery was in sight.

When Barbara Payton was found unconscious in the parking lot of Thrifty's Drug Store in February 1967, she had been living on the streets for several weeks, languishing in the wreckage of her destroyed life. After it was determined by the LAPD that there had been no foul play involved in the incident, and that Barbara's bloody state and bruises had resulted from her hitting the pavement beneath the garbage Dumpster after an all-night bout of drinking, she was admitted, as an indigent, to the charity ward at LA County General Hospital. Faithful and with her stomach badly distended from her rapidly failing liver, she was diagnosed as suffering from "chronic alcoholic psychosis, malnutrition and over-exposure to the elements." It is believed that immediately following her hospitalization, Barbara—homeless and broke, her liver now irreversibly ravaged by cirrhosis, and in constant physical pain—was taken by a county social worker to her parents home in the beautiful Mission Hills section of San Diego.

Unfortunately, Flip and Mabel Redfield had long battled their own problems with alcohol abuse and



35 year old Payton, in Hollywood, four years before her death (1963)

thus felt helpless against the sheer magnitude of their daughter's rapidly deteriorating condition. As a result, upon her arrival at their home, Barbara's self-destruction continued unabated, helped along by her parents' willingness to get drunk with her. A man named Lee Wootman, whose mother lived next door to the Redfields, remembers not only that Barbara's parents were unemployed and living off their savings when she came to live with them, but also that the two seemed to be on a constant bender. Wootman recalls that it was clearly obvious that in addition to her physical disintegration, Payton's mental health had been grievously affected by the many years of unrelenting abuse. At once, paranoid, combative—and completely dependent, Barbara's addictions had exacted a bitter toll on her state of mind. While in her parents' dubious care and with no restraints in place, her drinking soon accelerated to the point where she was drunk from morning to night.

On April 25th, Barbara was involved in an automobile accident when she hit a parked car at the corner of Fort Stockton Drive and Stephens Road, just a few blocks from the Redfield's home. The San Diego Police Department traffic investigation report noted that she was neither hurt in the 3:15 p.m. crash—nor was she charged with drunk driving. The accident proved to be an ominous prelude to a denouement that was fast approaching. Thirteen days later, on the afternoon of May 8th, the curtain made its final descent on Barbara's sad and tragic drama.

According to the San Diego County Coroner's report, Barbara had been sleeping on the living room couch for several hours when she suddenly awoke at 1:50 p.m. and complained to her parents that she wasn't feeling well. Sensing that there was something terribly wrong going on inside of her body, she staggered to the bathroom, and was soon heard moaning in absolute agony. Mabel immediately rushed to her daughter's side only to find her slumped over the toilet and already in the throes of death. By the time an ambulance and the San Diego police arrived at the Redfield's Titus Street home, Barbara's long, circuitous journey had ended violently with her painful death from heart and liver failure. It was two days before the authorities realized who Barbara was—or had once been—for her bloodied and gruesome appearance prevented any easy recognition of her from her movie-star days. Although she died six months shy of her 40th birthday, one officer noted that, at death, "Barbara Payton looked like a woman twenty years older than her reported age." Her 25-year-old son, [ohn, whom Barbara had seen infrequently over the years, was serving in the Vietnam War at the time of his mother's death.

Although it was tacitly reported in her back-page obituary that Payton had died from natural causes, it seems more likely that her death was, in reality, a slow and arduous suicide that began the day she left her small-town Midwestern life in 1947 for the hallowed grounds of Hollywood Babylon. In a town built on greed, broken promises and lies, Barbara averted herself of its riches, and then watched each one of her dreams disappear. In the end, overwhelmed by a life of wretched excess—and her own rebellious spirit—she died alone—a crushed and broken woman.

Hollywood's past like Egypt. Full of crumbling pyramids. It'll never come back. It'll just keep on crumbling until finally the wind blows the last studio prop across the sands.

So called the legendary Hollywood producer David O. Selznick, in his keen appraisal of the town that



Barbara had reviled in A town that, for her, once held the promise of glamorous fame and fortune, but instead, quickly became a Paradise Lost. Somewhere in her amazing story of incredible sadness and pathos lies a strong cautionary tale for the countless young women who, to this day, continue to leave their small hometowns for Hollywood and for the lure of an spotlight. They might do well to learn the saga of the wild and beautiful Barbara Payton—taking careful notice of her missteps and—especially—of the tragic, final outcome of her life. Surely, her story, though unpleasant, has tremendous potential in preventing other aspiring actresses from making similar mistakes. With that in mind, we might consider naming Barbara Payton Guardian Emissaries of all Hollywood Starlets. In this way, it's assumed she won't ever be forgotten again. And that, I'm certain, would make her happy at last.

In the crumbling wasteland of this modern-day Babylon, the unforgiving Santa Ana wind blows the remnants of Barbara Payton's shattered dreams across the Sunset Strip. Somewhere in that wind are the haunting

echoes of Barbara's miseries. I am I AM NOT ASHAMED "I'll get a wise with bubbles in it and I drink enough of it, I can look at my reflection in a store window and see myself as I was the first time I wore a mask. I don't go out much anymore, and when I do, it's just down to the Coors and Hones Bar on Sunset Boulevard for a drink. It's just a short walk to the place and once in a while, I steal a look at a window. I try not to look, and I only see what I want to see." Hopefully, the white diamond with blue eyes—this sad-eyed soulful hovering somewhere over Hollywood—has won the peace she found so elusive in life. —

Note

John O'Dowd is the author of the upcoming Barbara Payton biography, entitled "FROM THE GLITTER TO THE GUTTER: THE RISE AND FALL OF HOLLYWOOD STAR BARBARA PAYTON", which contains over 250 photos of the actress. Payton's life story is also the subject of a theatrical feature film currently in development in Los Angeles.

www.witchinghourvideo.com



"The best damn video dealer on the net...!"

--Prof. Tread, www.brainsonfilm.com

Witching Hour Video

New Additions! Many more in our catalog! Order Now!

Battle Royale - In-lane Japanese "SURVIVOR" thing that pits teens against each other in a quest for true survival. Watch as these kids bump each other off one by one until only one is left standing! With ENGLISH subtitles!

Burlesque Corps - Fun drive-in trash about a gang of mercenaries who harass a Mexican village. They soon find a couple of bitch-bikers & brutally assault the women! UNCUT & IN ENGLISH.

Cry Sweet Revenge aka Union Town's Cabin - UNCUT & IN ENGLISH with the AI Adomson violence & trash footage!

Blood Curamuff - GREAT and NASTY Italian sex 'n' violence has a transvestite and his girl raping and abusing young women... But they get theirs in the end! Sex and gore! Italian language.

Killers on Wheels - ULTRA-RARE, NEVER BEFORE SEEN Show Brothers' biker Rick! Better grab this one! German language.

The Japanese Spiderman - COOL collection of Spiderman done Japanese style direct from Japanese television complete with cool commercials and all! Japanese language but who cares?!

Kirikoe - AWESOME Japanese modern-day trash film about a billed samurai WOMAN with a blade that pops out from her walking stick! Lots of action & blood! With ENGLISH subtitles!

Nanookanna "I Can't Sleep" - Newer from Dario Argento is a great return to his dark style. A demented midwife is killing off beautiful women! Terrific cutting & gore scenes! In ENGLISH.

Obscene Beast Teacher aka Angel of Darkness - LIVE ACTION of this twisted Japanese anime series about wild tentacle demons who molest hot Japanese schoolgirls! We have all 5 volumes. Each volume sold separately so please specify the exact volume you want when ordering. In Japanese, but easy to follow.

Queen of Black Magic - Great black magic horrors from Indonesia! Stars the lovely Suzanna as a voodooist. Hard to find ENGLISH language print!

The Turkish Wizard of Oz - Crazy Turkish version of the U.S. WIZARD OF OZ but much more strange! A MUST SEE! In Turkish only but easy to follow!

Women's Flesh - TOTALLY VILE and BRUTAL Japanese snuff-type video that has women torturing parts of their own bodies including their intestines! A must for splatter freaks! Japanese language.

We Now Carry Import DVDs Too!

Check us out at witchinghourvideo.com where you can shop securely and privately online at our award-winning website! Obscure Horror, Lost Cult Films, Exploitation, Asian and Drive-In Sleaze as well as Import DVDs, T-shirts, Horror Soundtracks & more! Our huge magazine style catalog is \$3 or \$2 with a video order. International customers get your catalog for \$6 postage paid!

Witching Hour Video-Dept.CM

R.O. Box 21744

Lexington, KY 40522-1744

USA



**All videos are \$18 each,
order 5-9 videos & they are \$16 each,
10 or more \$14 each!**
Prices include postage for US customers!
Foreign customers must add \$7 per video for air mail postage.
ALL VIDEOS IN USA-NTSC(VHS) FORMAT ONLY!



VERNE LANGDON STORY

From 1963 through 1968, Verne Langdon was co-owner of Don Post Studios. During this period, he was responsible for the company's extensive commercial product and stage. A recent in-depth interview focusing on the motion-related aspects of Verne's life can be found on Jimmy Dougherty's *Box Of Monsters* website, <http://www.boxofmonsters.com> and is a recommended reading and viewing for those *Cult Movies* magazine readers interested in masks, and more about Verne Langdon! How that interview came to be, and how Verne acquired the original (and ONLY!) life mask of Bela Lugosi, and a rare burst of television pioneer Korla Pandit, are related here by Verne for your reading pleasure.

The world of mask collecting is unfamiliar to me, so in the last year I was very surprised to see one of my original Zentao masks going on display to the highest bidder for \$162.50. In 1972, this very same mask was originally priced to sell in James Warner's Publications for \$39.95, and I am amazed at the fact one (and maybe even two) are still around, thirty years later.

Recently a very talented mask maker, makeup artist and lab technician, Kelly Mann, magnificently resurrected my Zentao Mask. It's being offered by Kelly's RETRO RUBBER in a limited edition (only 30 will be used before the mold is destroyed!) You can check it out on Kelly Mann's most unusual website at <http://happyhaunting.tripod.com/masks/>

This mask connects, arranged by my good friend Dante Renta (himself a mask collector of note), brought about a very detailed interview with Jimmy Dougherty. This interview opened wide the doors to my memory vault (with a lot of help from my former Wife but always Very Best Friend Dawn, and a few others), and jump-started some fond recollections of my mask past, including the pursuit of boyhood desires for a couple of genuine show business artifacts with which you may be familiar.

At Don Post Studios in the 1960's, Don Sr. made life masks, including Peter Lorne's, Christopher Lee's, Tor Johnson's, Buster Keaton's, and even one of ME! I made the life mask of Don Post Sr. that I am told is making collector's rounds today, and also the life mask of John Carradine.

I eventually assembled our "Don Post Private Collection" of life masks, consisting of all the stars who had played in "moralist" movies, including Boris Karloff, Basil Rathbone, Lon Chaney Jr., Vincent Price, Peter Lorne, John Carradine, Charles Laughton, Tor Johnson, and last (and almost never!), Bela Lugosi.

The Lugosi life mask was nearly impossible to find. But I was determined to find it, and I am the knight in tarnished armor who eventually secured Bela's life mask from probable oblivion. Bela Lugosi has always been one of my faves, and I wanted his life mask... if one even existed, because I wanted his life mask!

I methodically explored every makeup department in Hollywood, including Warner Bros. with Gordon Bau, and the old lab at Universal, with Bud Westmore's help. These expeditions yielded nothing. I learned the studio wouldn't just do a life mask of you because you might be a cult figure someday. Not without a purchase or budget order number, and a show to bill it to, with an okay up front from the producers and/or the studio. The only reason that studio makeup departments ever took life mask impressions was if appliances were to be made, or a dummy head of the star was required. But the extra expense of a life mask and appliances usually dictated the alternate use of stunt-doubles who... with costume and

wig... looked enough like their acting counterparts to pass on medium or long shots, with close-ups of the actors interwoven into the action.

Bela's friend and agent, Don Marlowe, revealed some years after Bela's passing that Universal had cast actor Ian Keith to essay the role of "Dracula" in *Alfred Hitchcock's* *Mortuary*, and only when a persistent Marlowe stormed the office of a studio head and demanded that Bela Lugosi be signed to play the part did the studio drop Keith and hire Lugosi, a mere five days before shooting began.

There was no reason for a life mask to done of Bela, and Bud Westmore would have loaned me the mask if he had it.

After a year or more, I finally found Bela's life mask in Columbia Studio's makeup lab, where expert lab technician/makeup artist Clay Campbell had immortalized the 61-year-old Lugosi's classic countenance for the great special effects finale in *Return of the Vampire* (Columbia, 1943). Columbia's Makeup Department Head, Ben Lane, thought it was a life mask of Paul Muni. I



LUGOSI'S LIFE MASK

assumed it wasn't, and borrowed it. I still have it to this day. Ben is retired now, but I bet he often wonders whatever happened to that life mask of "Paul Muni." A full 3/4 mask, it includes Bela's ears and neck, down to his collarbone. Lugosi was said to have been claustrophobic, and this was the only mask ever taken of him. If any other Lugosi life mask had existed, I would have unearthed it.

In 1968 John Chambers borrowed the mask from me, explaining that Universal didn't have a life mask of Bela and they wanted one to display on their Universal Studios Tour. Werner Keppeler at Universal's makeup department made a mold from which a copy was cast. Somehow somebody got to it and "filled" a copy from the duplicate that Werner made for Universal, and now it's all over eBay and everywhere else. But I've got the original, with some of Bela's eyelashes still stuck in it. When Johnny returned the life mask to me, I couldn't help but notice that someone in Universal's Makeup Department had identified it by printing - inside the back of the mask with

a thick, black permanent marker "B. LUGOSI." It only makes you wonder how they would have spelled "Paul Muni."

Don loved this little collection of life masks, so I took an impression of his face and appropriately included his mask in the "Don Post Private Collection." We even did a life mask of Furry Ackerman, and gave Furry a complete set of copies, including his own mask.

Speaking of Bela Lugosi's life mask, and just for the record, the incredibly talented Pat (nee Patricia) Newman - I called her "Pugger" - sculpted every detail of all our "Dracula" masks by eye and hand. Her only reference for these works were the photos Universal supplied, and a few pictures of Dracula from Bela's own private collection, which Hope Loring Lugosi had given to me in 1956, shortly after Bela's passing. The rumor that Don Post Studios was "provided a copy" of Bela's life mask to develop the Dracula mask is incorrect, nothing could be further from the truth. I mimed the only life mask of Bela ever taken, for the sole purpose of adding it to the Post collection, some time after Pat had completed two or three versions of Dracula.

During my tenure at Don Post Studios, I also made a life mask of my friend and music instructor, Korla Pandit, whom I had known since 1955.

Korla was a musician and a Mesmerist, famous for his eyes, his lips, his turban with the Snorkley Topaz jewel and hypnotic dangling *Diamonds*, his beautifully inspirational music, and the fact that for all his years on radio and television, he never spoke a word, gazing dreamily into the camera and into the hearts and imaginations of millions of viewers over the years. He became known for playing his favorite instruments simultaneously, the Hammond organ with his left hand, a grand piano with his right. Korla was an extremely gifted virtuoso, who very quickly earned international acclaim as an expert on



KORLA PANDIT

a new instrument, Hammond's "electronic organ." He was the creative of "Electronic", and he composed it up musically on radio (he was the organist for Chandi, the Magician), affecting all manner of inventive, never-before-heard orchestration, percussion, and even sounds like

bad calls and thunderstorms

In 1944 Korla met and married a Durrey artist, Beryl Jane Debeson, and as described on Dejavu Records' Korla Pandit Website <http://www.KORLAPANDIT.com>, the bust of Korla Pandit was created in 1949 by Korla's wife Beryl's father, noted sculptor George Debeson, of Perris, California.

The Bust of Korla is 11and1/2 inches high by 5" wide and 4" deep. It was originally sculpted by Mr. Debeson in water base clay, and Korla signed the clay model on the left lapel before the mold was made, so that his signature is part of the bust. Only six castings of the Korla Pandit bust reportedly were made. Each was cast of bronze (clay that has been fired once, but not glazed).

These busts were a props and set pieces in Korla's television program, I first discovered them on a visit to one of Korla's "Adventures in Music" telecasts in 1955, "live" from KTTV Channel 11, in San Jose, California, where I grew up (so to speak). There were two white busts with faint gold highlights, a pale blue bust with gold highlights, a bronze bust, and two gold busts.

The sculpting of the turban so perplexed Beryl's father, that eventually Korla wrapped muslin on the clay head to create the proper look. Hence the mold was made of the clay bust with a fabric turban, wrapped upon it by Korla himself!

Two of the Korla Pandit busts are now owned by the Pandit family, two are in the possession of collectors (one of which was purchased at auction on eBay, on July 22, 2001, for \$480.00), and the other two are unaccounted for. Try though I did, no amount of begging or cajoling would ever pry one of those busts loose from Korla or Beryl, who vaguely indicated to me that someday, if her Father ever made additional copies, maybe, then, I might receive one. In 1960 George Debeson passed away, and with him, it seemed at the time, any chance I would ever have a Korla Pandit bust.

How could it be that I would just "find" that which I had wanted so passionately over the years? Needless to say, hasty calls come easier, yet one day in 1986, as I was perusing an issue of The Free Press, I turned a page to discover an article about an avant-garde photographer, which featured a self-portrait of the shutter-master.

There, in stark B&W, the cameraman meditated into his own lens, amidst several mystic-type items, his props including -YESSSS! a KORLA PANDIT BUST!!

I immediately picked up my phone and hurriedly dialed his number! Yes, the bust was his, and in fact he was selling off many of his personal items to finance his transient relocation to New York City, and yes, indeed, he would consider a transfer of ownership for a reasonable sum. I offered, he countered, I wrote down his address, and before the sun sank below the yardarm, I had in my possession that previously unobtainable treasure which had eluded me ever since Korla, Beryl and I began our Friendship, some thirty-plus years before.

How did that photographer come by such a grand trophy? His story went that he obtained it from a costume friend, who had received it from a KTLA Tele vision Studios executive, who had been involved with the production of the Korla Pandit show when it was first seen on the television scene. The bust had then been used as Korla's stand-in, and, in fact, featured a faux diamond in place of the sculpted one on its celebrated turban. This was, indeed, one of the six busts produced by Beryl's Father, today it commands a place of Honor in my peaceful beach abode.

Korla Pandit passed away in 1990, Bela Lugosi in 1956, but I'll never, ever forget either of them, and forever cherish these rare mementos from their time on Earth.

I hope you leave this article with more than just this collector's crowing echoing in your mind. Hold fast to your own desires and goals, and realize that such happenings, or windfalls, can - and well - come to YOU, in YOUR Lifetime.

CULT MOVIES

My wonderful Father always encouraged me to follow my dreams, and I've heeded his sage advice with no regrets whatsoever. To you, Gentle Reader, may I urge the same: follow your dreams. It's far more rewarding than following anyone else's! And, while pursuing your dreams, keep in mind the words of Saturday Evening Post Editor George Horace Lorimer, who said "It's good to have money and the things money can buy, but it's good, too, to check up once in a while and make sure you haven't lost the things money can't buy."

Verne Langdon, September 2002, Manicoto-By-The-Sea



Verne Langdon & friends

TOUR OF TERROR

Presents

DRACULA + OUR

Vampire Vacation To

TRANSYLVANIA

October 28 - November 3, 2002

Professional Escorted Guided Tours

The Ultimate Halloween Experience:

Masquerade Ball & Accommodations at

Dracula's Castle in Transylvania

**Follow Harker's Trail from Stoker's Dracula Novel
Witch Trial & A Scare-You-Out-Of-Your-Wits Bonfire**

Midnight Haunted Graveyard Gathering

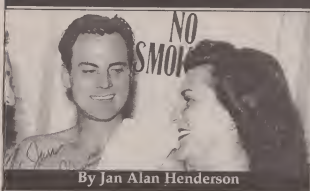
Dracula's Birthplace, Bran Castle, & much more...

Call Toll Free: (866) T-E-R-R-O-R-T-O-U-R

www.toursandevents.com



MY FRIEND JOHN: A REMEMBRANCE



By Jan Alan Henderson

In *Cult Movies* #36, Editor-in-Chief Mike Copner coined a phrase that undeniably describes one of the greatest periods in fandom of the 20th Century, the Monster Boom Generation (as opposed to the Baby Boom Generation). The Monster Boom years for this writer were from 1956 to 1965. In 1956, this writer got the first taste of full frontal fright on a beautiful Sunday afternoon when one of the local Los Angeles television stations re-run King Kong. A year later, on a weekday evening I was terrified and driven under the sofa at a pre-Shock Theater television screening of the 1931 *Frankenstein*.

Soon after that, I saw a plethora of cinematic shockers—*Day The World Ended* (which gave me nightmares for months), *House on Haunted Hill*, *House of Usher*, *Curse of the Werewolf*, *Werewolf in a Girls Dormitory*, and the television sinewigs became the terror transmission stations of the Monster Boomers. Los Angeles stations ran a version of Shock Theater, with initiators Chiller Theater, Jawsen Creepier Theater, Ward, Ward World, and Science Fiction Theater. By that time, monster magazines were the rage.

AUGUST, 1962—HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA
I had just returned from the compulsory vacation arranged by parents (to keep them from having nervous breakdowns) called summer camp. The summer of '62 had been a high point of fandom insofar as Warner Publications had released the first Famous Monsters of Filmland Yearbook and the first issue of *Scream Thrills Magazine*. These were hot items among kids at camp, and there was nothing more blissful than reading these sties with Bobby Dore Pickett's hit song *The Monster Mash* blaring out of a crackly transistor radio.

While flipping through my Famous Monsters Yearbook I came upon a makeup photograph of Leo G. Carroll in the advanced stages of atrophy from the Universal International picture *Tarantula* (long before I ever saw *Cult Movies* cover Boy Rondo Hinton). The photograph of a malling man burned an indelible imprint into my juvenile mind. By the age of 12 I was amassing a collection of what was considered by parents of the day to be deviant material. And I never forgot that photograph from *Tarantula*.

Soon we discovered poster exchanges, most notably Theater Poster Exchange of Memphis, Tennessee. One-shares were 50 cents, half-sheets and inserts were 35 cents. The first two movie posters I had in my collection were *Attack of the Puppet People* starring John Agar and *Donovan's Brain* with Lee Remick. So one could say a John Agar poster was the first piece in my collection.

Chiller Theater showed mostly Allied Artists pictures and other assorted independent production. One Saturday evening at a friend's house, I got my first taste of John Agar. Daughter of Dr. Jeckyl was showing that night, and I was hooked. From there on in, I tried to catch every John Agar science fiction film shown. Soon my friends and I began to rave in John's antics as the 20th Century *Schlock Man*. *The Brain from Planet Aros*, brewed to the center of the earth with John as he battled the mole people, and I finally thrilled to John's

entanglements with a fifty-foot Tarantula. We had all died and gone to monster heaven, and John Agar was one of our guides.

FLASH FORWARD MAY 1968

I had some time on my hands on Saturday mornings and I began to visit a store that specialized in rare videos, Eddie Brandt's Saturday Matinee, in North Hollywood, California. I'd arrive about 9 a.m., to quietly go through their vast library of vintage videos. One Saturday morning I walked Jocko Mahoney with two friends by the names of John Church and Herb Harris. At first, I don't recognize Jocko Mahoney. Luckily, I was renting some Columbia serials, and struck up a conversation with Jocko's friend, Herb Harris. Hence, by the end of our encounter, I had been introduced to Jocko Mahoney and was invited to breakfast with what has been referred to as the Jocko Mahoney Breakfast Club. Unfortunately, on that Saturday morning I had to decline the offer. But after several weeks of invitations from Herb Harris, I had one Saturday morning free and attended breakfast at Boy a Big Boy restaurant with Jocko, Herb, and John. There was a promise of an appearance by Richard Webb, known to baby boomers and monster boomers as Captain Menzies.

We all sat down, and most of us were having the Bob's breakfast buffet. But I ordered also Carla, eggs sunnyside up—big mistake! Jocko, after filling his plate with delectable goodies, sat down and asked me, Hey, watcht got there? To which I replied, Eggs sunnyside up. Jocko, grinning from ear to ear, said, You know, I did a couple of pictures with the Three Stooges. Whereupon, Jocko poked the sunny side out my freshly fried eggs. It is a fact that in all the years I ate breakfast with Jocko, I never ordered eggs sunnyside up again—I switched to omelets. Jocko was the ultimate prankster! True to the code of the Secret Squeedon, Richard Webb indeed showed up.

In late 1966, John Agar was brought into the group after being discovered hitting a round of golf balls at the Whittier Driving Range in Studio City. The group bounced around from Bob's Big Boy to the Sportsman's Lodge, and finally settled at Charlie's Restaurant, a bar and grill in Studio City where actors of Hollywood's Golden Age hung out and were reminiscenced about the glory days. I was not bounding with the group at this time, but I received a call from John Church telling me the group had settled in at Charlie's.

One tranquil Saturday morning, the whole gang was awoken at Charlie's, sipping coffee and catching up on the week's activities, when in walks John Agar! Suddenly, my mind was transported back to those monster boom days of old, where John Agar was the crown prince of monsterdom—Dr. Matthew Hastings battling with the screen's first giant spider invasion, *Savage March*, a victim of interplanetary brain possession, *Major Jay* trapped in Bronson Caves due to an infestation of recently deceased corpses (in the first and foremost *Night of the Living Dead*!), and archeologist Roger Bentley, who journeys into the Earth's core, only to run afoul of the mole people. And here he was, sipping coffee and swapping stories with his old friends Jocko

and Dick Webb.

Upon being introduced to John, I learned two things up front. I extended my hand and said, Nice to meet you, Mr. Agar. First of all, my name is John. Mr. Agar was my teacher, he replied. With that, he shook my hand with what can only be described as the hand of death—I'm sure he had to have had the most powerful handshake on the planet (Aros or otherwise).

Soon John Agar was a regular of the Jocko Mahoney breakfast club, along with his wife, Loreta. I remember one breakfast conversation where John was telling all of us at the table how on one of the John Ford Westerns, that John Wayne and Ward Bond would drink themselves into oblivion before scenes were shot. When the legendary director John Ford called them before the camera, Agar marvelled how his two toasted friends could shake off their stupor and perform linear perfect scenes without betraying their over-intoxicated state.

Another morning during breakfast, John refused to use eye drops, and we began discussing eye injuries, as his wife had recently recovered from one. He told me that the drops were to ease chronic glaucoma that was caused by the silver spray painted contact lenses he was forced to wear in *The Brain from Planet Aros*. John also told me that he was glad that he had friends outside the world of show business, such as bowling and golf, to occupy his time when he wasn't acting. He became adept at bowling that he was a representative for the Brunswick Bowling Equipment Company. But make no mistake John's first love was acting.

John told us a hilarious golfing story about him and veteran character actor Trisram Coffin trying to have a quiet game. John related that Tris, preparing to drive a ball, went into his swing and faltered but enough to fall all to hear. He turned to John and friends and smiled, and remarked upon missing the ball. "I lost compression!" The visual of the star of *King of the Rocker* Man losing compression due to uncontrollable flaccidity on the golf course quite literally kept us laughing for weeks. My question to John was, Were we wearing the rockers?

One of my favorite ongoing jokes with John was me feigning great apyness over a night of lost sleep due to the fact that John had left the brain from planet Aros under my bed, and the demt thing talked in its sleep (probably a caffeine-induced hallucination). Every time I would tell this anecdote, John would start howling like a cross between the Wolf Man and Tarantula, to which I dubbed him the wild-beast of Burbank. I only wish I had photographs of the faces of the other players when John would let out these war whoops. This looks of horror would have been priceless. John and I loved being the pranksters.

Jocko Mahoney's Breakfast Club continued its meetings until early in 1989. Jocko and his wife Aurea decided to move to Washington state. There was a huge breakfast club going away party for Jocko and Aurea, and one turned out to give Jocko a grand farewell. Unfortunately, by the end of 1989 we lost Jocko, but the breakfast club continued on in his memory. Jocko's friends and fans continued to attend out of respect for Jocko. Of course, John Agar was no exception.

By the early '80s, Jocko Mahoney's Memorial Breakfast Club was gaining quite a reputation, and drawing many celebrity guests and friends of Jocko, including Terry Ford, Marion Catshen, Denver Pyle, Michael Berryman, Dana Andrews, Pierce Lynde, Robin Quivers, Sid Melton, Don Durant, Valde Hansen, Linda Clark, Ruth Buzzi, David White, Eddie Fontaine, and many more. Unfortunately, or fortunately depending



John Agar & Korla Pandit

CULT MOVIES

The New Age of Robert C. Chinn

Adult film stars from Linda Wong to John C. Holmes have graced the films of Robert C. Chinn. Just scan the list of Chinn's film titles and you'll get an idea of the variety of his work as a director: *Pizza Girls*, *Dreambody*, *The Girl From Denmark*, *The Seductress China Cat*. More than any other director in the adult biz, Chinn is known for both quantity AND quality.

Back in our 24th issue, when *Boogie Nights* was playing in theaters, we ran an article on Bob Chinn and HIS take on what the new documentary was portraying about the 1970's adult scene. We also ran a Chinn checklist of 69 titles, a checklist we declared to be a complete rundown of his career output. When we showed him the printed magazine and our article about him, Bob scanned the checklist and said politely, "Well, that's about half of them." I wonder if we'll ever be able to compile the complete Bob Chinn checklist?

We thought it was time to run another

hold. But I was thinking of some way to find a niche I could fill, get back to making erotic features in a way that wasn't going on at the moment."

Mr. Chinn has always enjoyed film noir, and he had good luck with the "Johnny Wadd, detective" series in the 1970's. He's always felt the need to have the sex evolve out of the natural telling of a story.

"There are no more theaters, everything's gone digital, and I was already thinking about something to do with television when I got into this fortune cookie. For the life of me I haven't been able to find that little piece of paper since then, and I don't recall the exact wording. But it said something about not procrastinating and rise to new heights doing what I do best. Well, what do I do best? For years I've written, produced and directed movies. I decided then to make some contact—phone calls and get back to work."

To make a long story short, in the past year, Bob Chinn has been busier than he's been in his incredibly productive life. He's bridging several gaps at once, each time he makes a film. He makes a hard core and a soft core version of the film in English language, then makes a hard core and soft core version of the same film in Spanish. So a new title will sell to home video in two languages, and eventually sell to cable TV in (at the very least) America and Mexico.

And that's just for starters. When he books a studio for four days of shooting, he goes in to make three features, each in four distinct versions. So the end result is twelve movies at the end of each shooting period. Obviously this calls for lots of scripting and preparation.

"Our new series of detective movies are pre-sold to the Spice Channel and the Playboy Channel. At Playboy, their attorneys go over each script line by line and approve it before we can shoot even one page. Once we've got the okay, we don't alter a single word of the dialogue. They want these films tailored to their specifications or they won't run them."

The industrious Mr. Chinn has revived the Johnny Wadd series, with a young Joel Lawrence now essaying the role of the famous detective. The series has done so well in all markets, the Chinn has gone into competition with himself by creating a new and different detective character, one "Peter Magnum" as portrayed by the handsome Lee Stone. (One of the Magnum pictures, *Daughters of the Dragon*, is of special interest in that it features a guest appearance by long time favorite, Jade East).

In these accompanying photos we see our covergirl Miko Lee, the exotic sensation



who stars in Chinn's new espionage thriller, *Re-Enter Johnny Wadd*.

Also featured is another Chinn-girl, who mysteriously bills herself only as "Bamboo"! The sultry Miss Bamboo is a Viet Namese girl (originally from France), who is a true Martial Arts expert and is fluent in many languages.

In a recent discussion about the state of the biz over the years, we naturally settled on talking about *Boogie Nights*, the film purporting to "tell it like it was" in the anything goes 1970's world of adult filmmaking.

"It's a lot like the film about Ed Wood, which was largely a fantasy. Maybe Martin Landau did a good portrayal of Lugosi, but so much of it was fiction. And in the case of *Boogie Nights*, they never talked to me. They hired Ron Jeremy, who wasn't even around or in town when we were making

films, to be their technical advisor and he told them what he thought. So the character of John C. Holmes came out looking more like what Jeremy wished Jeremy could have been. And I came out looking like Burt Reynolds."

I was curious to know if Bob had ever met Ed Wood. "Yes, when he was around trying to sell scripts to A.C. Stephens. And we'd



idea about Mr. Chinn, because he's breaking his own record, and everyone else, by doing something that no one else in the biz has ever attempted before. And it all started with a fortune cookie.

"I'm not superstitious, and even though I'm Chinese, I don't have any special belief in fortune cookies. But something happened about a year ago, and things just clicked." Bob pauses long enough to light a cigarette before going on with this story. "It's almost eerie the way it worked out."

"I hadn't made a picture in years. Somehow I'd put my directing career on

see him getting drunk at the West Coast Producers meetings. But I never had the pleasure of working with Eddie. He was just an average looking guy, maybe a little rumpled sometimes. But I never heard anything about the cross-dressing until much later. I don't think very many people knew. Or cared."

Is there anything special that Bob Chinn looks for in an actress when she's going to get laid bare before his explicit camera lens? "She has to be able to project something, without me telling what it is or how to do it, that will make the average man at home want to love her. And of course no two men want the same thing, necessarily. But when we're making a film, the director is too busy, and it's really too late in the game, for me to



give acting class in how to be desirable. The actress must know instinctively how to be seductive in front of that camera.

"That same maxim holds true for the crew, too. I work with the same technical crew each time so they'll know what I'm looking for by way of lighting, camera movements, and so on. When we're making features on tight schedules, there's no time to explain or teach a class on what should happen next. And good talent usually picks up real fast on the best ways to do things."

What's next on Chinn's agenda? "My desk is overflowing with scripts to work over, and get ready for the next few months of production."

It almost seems like the glorious 1970's are back again, and Mr. Chinn is leading the pack in quality and quantity in his output of eroticism. Things are moving real fast for him now. And to think it all started earlier this year with a fortune cookie. ----



Bamboo



"CUMMING SOON!"

30 XXX TRAILERS FROM THE 1970'S ON DVD!

DEEP THROAT, DEVIL IN MISS JONES, TABOO, DEBBIE DOES DALLAS and MANY MORE!

FRENCH IMPORT DVD - NTSC - ALL REGION 74 MIN. - ALSO AVAILABLE ON VIDEOCASSETTE

\$19.98 plus shipping*

(*\$5 US and Canada, \$9 everywhere else)

TRASH Palace

**P.O. BOX 1972, DEPT. CULT
FREDERICK, MD 21702-0972, US
or CALL US AT 301-698-9556**

For lotsa' cool stuff visit our website

WWW.TRASHPALACE.COM



CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIED ADS

DON'T PAY MORE for rare horror, science-fiction, art, sexxx, punk, etc. films on video. 3,000 films most \$13 each or two-on-one-tape for \$20. Fast, friendly, efficient service. Professional duplication. Catalogue - \$2. Joseph A. Gervasi, 142 Frankford Ave., Blackwood, NJ 08012-3723. E-mail: jag666@erols.com

AMAZING VIDEO - Imports, blaxploitation, bikers, blood, sleaze, drive-in, music, wrestling, documentaries, lost TV, and more! Low prices, quality, fast returns, new illustrated catalogue only \$3.00 (cash only). Send to: Joe Szabo, 5303-C St., Georges Green, Austin, TX 78745.

SUPER RARE videos!!! Karloff, Price, Chaney Jr., Lugosi, Steele, scream queens! Free catalog, write: Video Vamp, 23 Big Spring Circle, Cookeville, TN 39501. Website: members.aol.com/vampvideo

CARL J. SUKENICK'S "SPACE SPAWNS" starring Debbie Rochone from American Nightmare \$29.00 payable to Carl J. Sukenick, 305 w. 28 St. #12-D, New York, NY 10001

WANTED: VHS movie "The Nasty Rabbit" (1965) starring Arch Hall and Melissa Morgan (AKA Liz Renay). Write to: Arcenio Islas, Jr., 909 Nosotros St., Calexico, CA 92231.

RARE VIDEOS!!! As low as only \$10 each (postpaid)! Please send a S.A.S.E. for list to: Scott Ingegno, 525-200 Riverleigh Ave., Riverhead, NY 11901.

GIRLS GALORE! Golden age porn loops from the 60s & 70s. Butch bitches & lipstick lesbians. 75 mins of color, all-girl action. VHS. Only \$9.95 (free postage) to: Cult Movies, PO Box 1047, Hollywood, CA 90078.

HOLLYWOOD BOOK & POSTER CO. Classic & current film, TV & music collectibles, posters, photos, videos, DVDs, T-Shirts, mags, scripts, & much more. 6562 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028. www.hollywoodbookandposter.com

FOR COMPLETISTS only! Rare back issue of Cult Movies Issue #5. As mint as an 11 year old mag on newspaper paper can be. Direct from Mike Copner's secret stash, a steal at only \$50.00. Contact: Cult Movies, PO Box 1047, Hollywood, CA 90078.

BIZARRE EUROPEAN VIDEOS! (Whatever you want, we have it!) www.xxzeuro.com

WWW.ODDREQUESTS.COM Do you have an Odd Request? We cover it all. Videos, adult tours, models & escorts, classifieds, personals, request bulletin board, beautiful men and women, chance encounters, info site and services. Website constantly updated:

www.OddRequests.com

ONE LOCK OF VAMPIRA'S HAIR. Only one available. Certificate of Authenticity and personalized autograph on certificate. Only serious buyers please. Send your offer to PO Box 685 Torrance, CA 90508 and email or telephone number.

Your ad could have been printed here. Let over 80,000 film fans find out what you're selling or seeking. Write or type your ad and we'll print it nexttime. Classifieds are still only 50 cents per word. Send to: Cult Movies, PO Box 1047, Hollywood, CA 90078-1047 www.cult-movies.com

***** DO YOU LOVE BELA LUGOSI? *****

☐ Yes, I'd like the **BLACK DRAGONS** POSTER. Enclosed is \$10.00 for the poster and \$3.00 for s+h. Send poster to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Please send coupon and payment to:

CULT MOVIES MAGAZINE

PO BOX 1047
HOLLYWOOD, CA 90078-1047



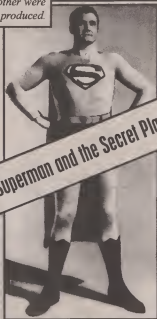
THIS COLORFUL 22" x 28" POSTER WOULD LOOK

EXCITING
ON YOUR WALL!

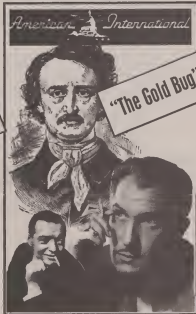
Hollywood's Lost Archives

by Ralph Schiller

Hollywood's archives hold so many hidden treasures of unproduced, unfinished or unreleased motion pictures. There are thousands of scripts and screenplays for films that for one reason or another were never produced.



"Superman and the Secret Planet"



"The Gold Bug"

Superman And The Secret Planet

The first reference to this 1957 script can be found in Gary Grossman's book on the Superman saga, *Superman: From Serial To Cereal* published in 1976. DC Comics was the actual producer of the popular television series *The Adventures Of Superman* in the 1950s. The program began as a feature length B-film *Superman And The Mole Men* in 1951. *Mole Men* was a feature with a short running

time that was later cut-up into episode nos. 25 and 26 of the series's first season. Grossman writes that DC comics had two feature length scripts written — "Superman And The Ghost Of Mystery Mountain" (1954) and "Superman And The Secret Planet" (1957) — but neither film was produced. Grossman details, "No one seems to know why, but the best guess is that DC Comics was more than satisfied with the success of the television

series and did not care to risk a flop at the box office."

Jan Alan Henderson, author of *Speeding Bullet: The Life And Bizarre Death Of George Reeves* in 1999, wrote "Superman And The Mole Men" was re-released in 1957. It is interesting that it was the last year of production of the TV show. While the show was in production for 6 seasons, two other features were in the production office. In 1954, a script titled

'Superman And The Ghost Of Mystery Mountain' was to be produced but never materialized. The same is true for 'Superman And The Secret Planet' in 1957. No explanation was given as to why these projects never reached the light of day, but scripts were written."

Of the two screenplays only "Superman And The Secret Planet" seems to have survived. I obtained a copy of "Secret Planet," but little or nothing can be found on the other script, "Superman and the Ghost Of Mystery Mountain," which would have been written at the height of the series' popularity in 1954. Jan Henderson, in correspondence wrote on March 14, 1999, "Unfortunately, I do not possess a copy of the Superman script 'Superman And The Ghost Of Mystery Mountain.' After

checking around, I have found that this screenplay probably does not exist. According to a friend (who knows one of the higher ups at DC Comics), the story was a back-up episode for the 1953 season, in case the episode "Panic In The Sky" went over budget. There might be a story outline, but no one I know has it, or has heard of it."

I contacted Jim Nolt, creator and host of the *The Adventures Continue*, a website (www.jimnolt.com) devoted to the life of actor George Reeves and the *Superman* television series. He responded that Jan Henderson's information regarding "'Ghost Of Mystery Mountain' comes from me and that's the extent of my knowledge, and I'm not certain that it is 100% accurate. It was so long ago,

and stories get twisted and tangled in that amount of time I'm too bad that Whitney Ellsworth is no longer around to answer our questions!"

Whitney Ellsworth wrote the screenplay of "Superman And The Secret Planet," with the cast of the television series repeating their roles. George Reeves would play Superman. Noel Neil would return as Lois Lane, Jack Larson reprising his portrayal of Jimmy Olsen, John Hamilton was of course Perry White, and Robert Shayne once again as Inspector Henderson. The screenplay is 94 pages, long enough for a short feature length film, or to be divided into two television episodes.

Here is a synopsis of the 94-page script of "Superman And The Secret Planet":

ADVENTURES

Two air force fighter jets take off first, followed by a transport plane. As soon as they're in the air, the jet pilots nearly loose control of the steering of their fighters and quickly return to the airport. The transport plane is doing fine and continues in the air.

Back in Metropolis. Clark Kent, watching the evening news, hears the disturbing news that the President of the United States has vanished. Clark Kent quickly rips off his glasses, and begins to loosen his tie. So begins this un-filmed adventure of Superman.

The scene changes to the office of Perry White, editor of the *Daily Planet*. Metropolis' great metropolitan newspaper. Perry decides to dispatch Clark, Lois, and Jimmy to Washington to cover this story. The national Federal Security Office (FBI and/or Secret Service) calls Perry White's office and asks for Clark. The federal agent asks him to contact Superman. The G-Man explains that radar shows that the President's plane did not crash but simply headed into outer space at a fantastic speed. Nothing could overtake it, nothing except Superman. Kent assures the agent that he is certain that Superman is already trying to rescue the President.

Suddenly we see newspapers rolling off the presses displaying banner headlines: **THE PRESIDENT VANISHES**. Clark Kent flies into outer space at top speed to check out several nearby planets and comets. Superman finds the planet of Kryptonite, a small asteroid only several square miles in area. Kryptonite is actually a small surviving chunk of the great planet Krypton, where Superman was born. Below the planet's surface is a colony of Kryptonians led by their ruthless dictator Zorax, who clearly resembles Ming the Merciless (of the *Flash Gordon* serials). Superman comes across a boulder of pure green Kryptonite, which is deadly to him, but he escapes.

Back on earth, the Vice-President has declared a national state of emergency, and Zorax jams TV reception in order to deliver his message of universe domination. Clark Kent has a plan to combat Zorax. He suggests to the federal agent that one plane be sent up in hopes of it being watched like the President's plane. Kent says the pilot could relay valuable messages to Earth and volunteers for the job himself. The agent reluctantly agrees and the adventure begins. Jimmy and Lois in their usual enthusiasm for a scoop stow away on the plane with Kent. After capture and interrogation by Zorax, Superman attempts a rescue and fails. Jimmy and Lois realize then that Zorax and his army would have the same powers on Earth as Superman. The situation appears grim.

In Metropolis, Perry White meets with police Inspector Henderson and the Metropolis Mayor and department heads. Perry sadly realizes after losing Kent, Olsen, Miss Lane and perhaps even Superman, there is no choice but to capitulate to Zorax. All advocate complete surrender.

Meanwhile Zorax has his planet's my zero in on an iron deposit in the American west on Earth, to act as a magnet. US Army troops go on alert, and Civil Defense measures are taken across the USA. Jimmy and Lois are released to give Zorax's decrees to the world.

Back at the *Daily Planet*, Perry White orders the planning of the destruction of the printing presses, saying that's one thing Zorax's not going to control. Suddenly Lois and Jimmy walk into Perry's office. After accusing the reporters of gullivaring like tourists all over Washington, a relieved Perry White sits back and listens to their incredible story and journey. Jimmy gives Perry a radio device he says is from Zorax.

Zorax demonstrates his power by destroying a bridge in nearby Bay City, and Perry informs the authorities and the U.S. Air Force is called into action. It is ordered to make a bombing run on the planet in the valley and destroy it. Zorax learns of the attack and orders the waves of U.S. warplanes be destroyed in the air. A Kryptonian frees Superman during the attack. Superman escapes through the trapdoor on the planet's surface and flies away. Zorax's laser ray destroys wave after wave of the bombers before a single bomb is even dropped.

At this point the battle between Superman and Zorax heats up with catastrophes from Zorax's ray and Superman's rescues. At that moment, an angry Zorax calls Perry White and demands that Superman return at once to captivity, threatening the life of the President. He also promises a disaster or catastrophe every hour on the hour unless Superman returns. He uses his ray to start a blizzarding forest fire in a national park. Clark leaves Perry's office, goes down the hallway, looks around, and enters the store room! Superman flies to the fire and spots a nearby black rain cloud. Using his super breath, he pushes the cloud over the fire, which quickly extinguishes it. This setback angers Zorax to create further disasters.

ADVENTURES OF

ror classics *Bucket Of Blood* and *Little Shop Of Horrors*. In *Faster And Farrier*, Griffith offers many candid comments throughout the book that are insightful, and seem like a breath of fresh air rarely

found in publications of Hollywood history. Sure enough, Chuck Griffith speaks extensively about his screenplay of "The Gold Bug", which was intended to be a civil war comedy!

I contacted Mr. Griffith and filled him in on the previous written information about "The Gold Bug" contained in the *Filmfax* article. In his return correspondence, Chuck Griffith wrote:

I've made a career of missing films. Unfortunately, most of them are lost, including "The Gold Bug." Written in the days of typewriters and mimeos, the front copy was sent to Roger Corman from my Turkish exile. I may have scraps of the carbon around, but they would only be discarded pages.

The history of "The Gold Bug" is interesting. Roger wanted me to use the *Bucket Of Blood* structure on a Poe title, and "The Gold Bug" was the only one left.

If Sam Arkoff was looking for a castle location, he could not have been in sync with Roger - and certainly not with me. Nor have I ever heard of the ghosts of Capt. Kidd or his pirates - until your letter.

"The Gold Bug" was the story of Colonel Oliver Bolivar Beauregard Peachtree (Vincent Price), whose Southern plantation was burned out by General Sherman, leaving only the ground floor. The upper portions would be charred timbers and melted stained glass windows. Spooky, but not anticlimax.

I retained as much of Edgar Allan Poe's original as I could, mainly the lead-through-the-skull search for the treasure, but in fact it was *Bucket Of Blood* - *Little Shop Of Horrors* construction, and intended as a farce.

Col. Peachtree, ruined by the war, has turned his mansion into a hockshop of heirlooms. He has two faithful retainers, Auntie Beilum and Peter Lorne, whose character name escapes me just now. Among other duties, (Coachman, Butler, Saucier, etc.), he is the overseer of the hockshop storeroom. His uncle was an Admiral in the Transylvanian Navy. Auntie Beilum is Maazny with squeaky foot. ("And everyone thought it was the shoes!")

Basil Rathbone was cast as a carpenter, intent on buying up mansions on the cheap. And in this case, he had clues to a buried treasure. Rathbone is wickedly sure of victory, though he is made uneasy by the distant echo of harpsichord music in the night.

The music is provided by a cute little Gold Bug, kept as a pet in a snuffbox by Peter Lorne. He lets it out at night, and it dances on the harpsichord strings, doing The Gold Bug Rag.

When disturbed, the Gold Bug bites, and it should be known that the bite of the Gold Bug will turn you to gold. Solid. In the course of the picture, a series of character types are bitten and transformed, coincidentally mimicking well-known statues and visual clichés: Psyche at the Pool, Discobolus, Liberty, a One-Armed Bandit, etc.

Price and Rathbone discover this secret and use it against each other. I don't remember these sub-plot details. Rathbone eventually tries to melt down a golden statue - and it turns back to flesh.

Believe it or not, that's all I remember. The rest involved the treasure, the statues, and a chase, but it faded long ago. Perhaps it's due to Peter Lorne's death. It happened when I was halfway through the script. I had contrived situations so that, at the climax, he could utter one of his deathless lines. For example, at a deadly poker game with Price and the local Colonels, Lorne sips his mint julep through his cigar, and when it goes out, pats his pockets and finally asks Price, Can I trouble you for a match? When he died, I had to keep going, writing the same take-made-character only he could play.

While at work on it, I visited the set of *Marque Of Red Death* and spoke to Roger and Vincent Price about it. I told Vincent, "You lead Basil down the corridor, singed at the top, where a long line of family portraits are hanging, and you describe them individually to him."

"Oh, no!" cried Vincent. "Not again!"

"Wait," said I. "You are trying to can Basil into thinking that prints and copies of famous chestnuts are actually your ancestors. Thus the Blue Boy becomes The 3rd Earl of Peachtree, and -"

Getting it instantly, he cut me off, laughing and shouting, "You have to have The Laughing Cavalier! You absolutely must have The Laughing Cavalier! How does it finish?"

"As you run through the misarranging of the paintings, Basil Rathbone does surreptitious takes to the camera, sharing with the audience his appalled awareness of this pathetic dooch!" (Vincent loved that too, but Roger would not have permitted the takes to camera. He had a solid rule about that, which resulted in the killing one of the best shots in *Eat My Dust*.)

"But how does it finish?" asked Vincent Price.

"It ends when you stand proudly before the last picture and say, 'And this is my mother - Don't you think she has an enigmatic smile?'" (It's the Mona Lisa!)

After I sent in the huge script, I heard nothing for several years, until I ran into Sam Arkoff on the Via Veneto in Rome. After the hellos, I pitched him the idea of re-dubbing some cheap and silly Hercules-type pictures and turn them into comedies. He wagged his cigar at me and said, with thick sarcasm, "Why don't you write me a picture about the Civil War?" He walked away and I haven't seen him since.

It was a loss for everyone that Charles B. Griffith's screenplay of "The Gold Bug" was never filmed with that cast of Hollywood greats: Vincent Price, Peter Lorne and Basil Rathbone. Griffith's "The Gold Bug" could have been the perfect bookend to Richard Matheson's *Comedy Of Terrors*. Clearly, Jacques Tourneur would have been the best choice to direct "The Gold Bug" after his sure-handed direction of the hilarious *Comedy Of Terrors* with the same cast. We can also wish that Boris

Karloff and movie comedian Joe E. Brown might have been invited back for small roles in "The Gold Bug" just to add to the overall fun.

Historically, many film producers have always had a mortal fear of making movies about the Civil War, and would therefore avoid them like the plague. It appears that an angry Sam Arkoff later tried to get a horrific adaptation of "The Gold Bug" off the ground. There is no evidence to indicate that a second "Gold Bug" screenplay was ever

written before AIP killed the project. If there is anyone reading this who has a copy of Chuck Griffith's screenplay of "The Gold Bug" or knows where one can be had, please contact me care of this magazine.

There are many other items in Hollywood's lost archives, such as two Ed Wood Jr. screenplays intended for Bela Lugosi, a script for Jerry Lewis' unreleased "The Day the Clown Died" and an attempt to find Robert Taylor's "ghost" film. Perhaps we can cover them in the future.



**NOBODY
DOES IN YOUR
CAREER
BETTER:**



James Bond and the Actress Curse

BY JOE WAWRZYNIAK

Okay, so you're a hot, alluring, very beautiful and charismatic up-and-coming young actress. You're on the cusp of serious fame, just an inch or two away from worldwide popularity, and you're at a critical juncture in your promising career that could make or break you. So, what are you gonna do to consolidate your status as the major "it girl" of the moment and ultimately go down in history as a true cinematic giant? Why, play the female lead or at least a juicy co-starring role — the flamboyantly evil hench woman of the main male villain being especially choice — in the latest spectacularly lavish and exciting 007 action-adventure opus. I mean, who can say no to such an offer? We're talking James Bond here, supercool super-agent extraordinaire, peerless tireless womanizer who gets it on with the tastiest babes of every imaginable tantalizing ethnicity (naturally, this is precisely why so many full-blooded heterosexual men think Mr. Bond is the cat's pajamas), who's got a license to kill, has access to all kinds of state-of-the-art gadgets and weapons, and an unmatched reputation as a playboy swinger spy nonpareil. Now, surely if you're an actress, appearing in a Bond movie is the way to go, a surefire guarantee of instant tremendous success, and a delicious gravy train that'll lead to all kinds of significant parts in major motion pictures for years to come. *And you couldn't be more wrong, because that just ain't the case.*

For numerous actresses, appearing in a Bond film hurt rather than helped their careers. You see, James Bond films are actually a road to ruin, an auger ill of cinematic atrocities to come, a token nice sop on a dead end path which leads to horror features of variable quality, sleazola exploitation trash, worthless direct-to-video junk, abominably ill-advised big budget remakes of movies that no one could conceivably improve upon, and even dropping out of acting altogether for most actresses luckless enough to embark down this grim trail to immediate career suicide. The following list of hapless actresses whose decision to do a 007 entry caused them much misery, embarrassment, and career setbacks of dizzying magnitude is as sizeable as it is disturbing. One thing's for sure: Acting in a Bond pic is no guarantee of success; instead it's a curse, an albatross, an intensely egregious and dangerous wrong turn on a tricky turnpike that almost invariably leads to automatic cinematic oblivion and ignominy.

URSULA ANDRESS It makes perfect sense to begin with Ursula. After all, she was literally the first Bond girl, a major popular international sex symbol prior to portraying Honey Rider in *Dr. No*, and did become even more of a huge pin-up queen after her appearance in 007's initial celluloid outing. Later appeared in the ill-received 007 send-up *Casino Royale*. And, of course, this all proved to be for naught, for by the time the '60s came to an end Ursula's career really hit the skids. In the '70s Ms. Andress was toiling away in scuzzy Italian exploitation schlock, doing little more than dutifully doffing her duds in such grubby refuse as *The Servant's Nurse*, *Loaded Guns*, *Staircase Motel*, and *Slaves of the Cannibal God*, the last one being particularly notable because not only does Ursula take it all off once again, but also because she's captured by a tribe of vicious cannibals and damn nearly winds up being devoured by them. The fact that said flesh-eaters tie her to a pole, strip her naked, and paint her nude body with mud certainly doesn't help matters any. Oh well, at least Ursula has *The Teuth Victim* to her everlasting credit and did play Aphrodite at the age of 45 (!) in the big budget fantasy flop *Clash of the Titans*. Still, Andress' subsequent nosedive into sheer cinematic swill following her James Bond movie turn clearly sets the pattern for all future actresses whose careers similarly suffered after doing a 007 pic. Too bad nobody took notice of this bleak precedent early on; a lot of other careers could have been saved from a one-way descent into the sewer. Ursula herself hasn't acted in anything for a very long time.



CLAUDE AUGER

Following *Thunderball* Ms. Auger's career didn't exactly take off. By the early '70s she was relegated to acting in such choice Italian cheese as the confusing murder mystery thriller *Black Belly of the Tarantula* (fellow 007 honeys Barbara Bach and Barbara Bouchet are in this one too!) and the forgettable Chris (Insipid No-Talent Son of Robert) Mitchum revenge outing *Summertime Killer*. As of late her acting career is basically over and done with.

MAUD ADAMS

Ms. Adams holds the rare honor of having acted in two James Bond movies: *The Man With the Golden Gun* and *Octopussy*, playing the titular part in the latter no less. However, doing two instead of one 007 films is still no guarantee of a subsequent prosperous acting career. Okay, Maud did act in the terrific, uncomfortably prescient sci-fi doozy *Rollerball* after her *Golden Gun* stint, but the second time she acted in a Bond pic proved to be the kiss of death for her career. By the early '80s poor Maud wasn't having a good time of it: she's the unfortunate lust object of crazed tattoo artist Bruce Dern in the depraved psycho sickie *Tattoo*, then followed that major setback by acting in such crumbian adventure wipe-outs as *Target Eagle*, *Hell Hunters*, and *Jane and the Lost City* before sinking further into the "your career is flin-out-over" abyss with appearances in the godawful "we all coulda done without 'em" direct-to-video sequels *Angel III: The Final Chapter* and the especially abominable *Silent Night, Deadly Night IV: Initiation*, in which Maud has an extremely unflattering role as the bitchy head of a coven of evil man-hating lesbian witches! I think that speaks volumes about how low Maud sunk after doing two James Bond pictures.

BARBARA BACH

Widely considered to be Roger Moore's best-ever distaff foil by 007 fans, although this dubious distinction still didn't stop her career from going belly-up in a bunch of Italian horror flicks that Barbara wound up doing after her outstanding performance in *The Spy Who Loved Me*. Prior to this film Barbara was in *Black Belly of the Tarantula* and *Stateline Motel*, co-starring in the latter with original Bond broad Ursula Andress. After *The Spy Who Loved Me*, Bach was in the colossal big budget dog *Force Ten from Navarone*, then starred in both the enjoyably dopey *The*



Island of Dr. Moreau clone *Screamers* and the dreadful *Jaws* copy *The Great Alligator* for seasoned Italian dreck pic director Sergio Martino (Ursula also acted for Martino in *Slaves of the Cannibal God*; is it me or is there some creepy internal organic continuity going on here?). Poor Barbara also had the lead in the idiotic *Star Wars* cash-in *The Humanoid*, where she acted alongside both Richard "Jaws" Kiel and fellow Bond girl Corinne Clery! Back in the States Barbara had a solid lead in the remarkably seedy, perverse, and vastly underrated early '80s psycho sleeper *The Unseen*, in which the lovely Ms. Bach gets terrorized by nutso geek motel proprietor Sydney Lassick and his pitifully grotesque overgrown baby incest-spawned son Stephen Furst (Flounder in *Animal House*!), co-starred with future husband Ringo Starr in the funny prehistoric comedy *Caveman*, and did her best to retain what little dignity she still had left in the sophomoric comedy *Up the Academy*. Then she did the insufferable Paul McCartney vanity project *Give My Regards to Broadstreet* and hasn't acted in anything since.

HIM BASINGER

Ms. Basinger had an extraordinarily difficult time being taken seriously as a bonafide competent and capable actress after her critically lambasted performance in *Never Say Never Again*. Kim's career was done no favors by her often fatally indiscriminate taste in largely lame, most-probably-screwed-in-crayola-in-two-hours'-time patently pathetic scripts: I'm sure I'll get few arguments from readers when I firmly state that such cinematic crimes against film-viewing humanity as the sickeningly sappy *The Natural*, the Zalman King-backed soft-core snoozerfest *9 ½ Weeks*, *No Mercy*, *Blind Date*, *My Stepmother Is An Alien*, *Cool World*, *The Real McCoy*, and the needless *The Getaway* remake all choke the chicken with a teeth-grashing vengeance. Ms. Basinger miraculously salvaged her career from the cinematic scrapheap with her top-rate Best Supporting Actress Oscar winning portrayal of a melancholy hooker in the rightfully acclaimed *L.A. Confidential*. Alas, Kim just had to mull it by acting in the ludicrously abysmal end-of-the-world horror howler *Bless the Child*.

MARTINE BESWICKE

Like Maud Adams, this fearsome, yet still strangely enticing brunette tigress holds the rare distinction of being in two James Bond movies. More impressively, Beswicke did "em back to back, appearing in both *From Russia With Love* and *Thunderball* within a year's time! Went on to great fame as a Hammer horror/fantasy film icon, with such

worthy credits as *One Million Years, B.C.*, *Prehistoric Women*, and especially *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* to her name. Also quite effectively cast as the Queen of Evil in Oliver Stone's amazingly oblique and off-kilter fright film debut feature *Seizure*. Alas, by the late '70s Martine's once steady career went off the rails, starting with her brief turn as the head of a satanic cult in the uproariously awful made-for-TV killer canine howler *Devil Dog: Hound from Hell* and culminating in her starring role as infamous sexual adventures and best-selling tell-all author Xaviera Hollander in the totally asinine *The Happy Hooker Goes to Hollywood* (Adam West of TV's *Batman* fame acts in this one as well, which I think speaks volumes about how miserable this sucker truly is). Beswicke then went on to further tarnish her heretofore unsullied reputation by acting in such sour lemons as the typically terrible Fred Olen Ray groaner *Cyclone*, Gary Graver's slight horror black comedy *Evil Spaz*, and the useless "we all coulda done without it" sequel *Trancers II*, plus a voice only contribution to the futuristic *ALIENesque* direct-to-video sequel *Craters 4*. Oh well, at least Martine had a funny bit in the first-rate *Miami Blues* as a snobby waitress and gave a truly unnerving mute cameo as a murderer who gets executed at the very start of the pleasantly twisted and unjustly overlooked horror anthology sleeper *The Offspring*.

JACQUELINE BISSETT

After playing Miss Goodthighs in *Casino Royale* Ms. Bissett's career really took off with high profile parts in such successful movies as *Bullitt*, the trend-setting all-star disaster hit *Airport*, and *Murder on the Orient Express*. Became a hugely popular pin-up queen following her famous wet t-shirt scene in the otherwise unremarkable *The Deep*. By the early '80s Jacqueline's career ran out of gas with such dismal features as the cycle-destroying all-star disaster fiasco *When Time Ran Out*, the costly clunker *Imhoun*, and the crass teen comedy *Spaz* putting severe blemishes on Bissett's previously pimple-free oeuvre. Further humiliation awaited Ms. Bissett when she tackled a thankless co-starring part in Zalman King's horribly horrendous sound-cue exploitation stinker *Wild Orchid*.

HONOR BLACKMAN

Prior to her astonishing ball-busting turn as the lewdly named deadly bull dyke bitch Pussy Galore in *Goldfinger*, Ms. Blackman had a distinguished film and TV show career to her name. Her movie credits included *A Night to Remember*, one of the first pics about the historical sinking of the Titanic

which is loads better than that horribly overrated and interminably drawn-out mawkish piece-of-shit garbage that James Cameron later puked forth on an unsuspecting film-watching public. Moreover, Honor had originated the part of Ms. Emma Peel on the long-running British cult program *The Avengers*, a role also played by fellow future Bond babe Diana Rigg (Ms. Rigg isn't on this list for the simple reason that her post-007 work is unusually strong and on the money, as such nothing-to-apologize-for credits as *The Hospital*, *Theatre of Blood*, and, yes Virginia, even *The Great Muppet Caper* happily confirm). Honor's post-*Goldfinger* career went smoothly for awhile, but come the early '70s it petered out. Starting with the crude slasher prototype *Fright*, hitting its biggest low with both the excruciating comedy Western *Something Big* and Hammer's heart-breakingly lackluster final filmic fling *To the Devil a Daughter*, and concluding with the dreary "why bother?" remake *The Cat and the Canary*, Ms. Blackman's '70s career was a veritable trainwreck of cinematic misfires that are best left forgotten today.

BARBARA BOUCHET

After playing James Bond's fiercely loyal and adoring secretary Miss Moneybags in the much-maligned all-star 007 spoof *Casino Royale* one would think that this slinky and arousing Italian sex kitten was gonna really go places as an actress. Alas, this was not to be. By the time the '70s rolled around Barbara Bouchet was constantly taking off her clothes for an increasingly ubiquitous series of nude scenes in countless Italian horror and exploitation features: the cockiness a lucky-ass 12-year-old boy by brazenly flaunting her naked body in front of him in Lucio Fulci's deeply unsettling *Don't Torture a Duckling*, dances in the buff on a car hood in the jaw-droppingly low-rent Mafia crime picture *The Mean Machine* (Chris Mitchum stars in this one as well; need I say more?), gets boned up the butt by ferocious hitman Henry Silva while clinging to a side of beef in the especially slimy *Cry of a Prostitute*, and even seduces Yul Brynner in the revenge opus *Death Rage*. Better still, Barbara also appeared in *Block Belly of a Tarantula* with fellow Bond babes Claudine Auger and Barbara Bach! Hasn't acted in anything lately.

BARBARA CARRERA This earth-shakingly sumptuous beauty possesses a smoldering sensuality that's potent enough to turn even the most hardy and resilient man's knees into gummy, wobbly, can't keep my balance if I tried jello. Barbara's career

got off to a shaky start when her initial cinematic forays *Embryo* and the '77 *The Island of Dr. Moreau* remake failed to click with a mass audience. Carrera's subsequent film ventures *When Time Ran Out*, *Condomorion*, and *I the Jury* likewise tanked at the box office and got short shrift from the critics. Only *Lone Wolf McQuade* struck gold with the movie-going public. Then along came Barbara's superbly sexy and spirited turn as insanely predatory assassin Fatima Blush in *Never Say Never Again*. One would think that Ms. Carrera's got it made in the shade. El wrongo, bud. Instead Barbara's career went inexplicably down the tubes, starting with the plodding "nobody asked for it" sequel stiff *Wild Geese II*. Barbara gave a hilariously lascivious performance as a constantly on the make witch in the riotously bawdy comedy *Love of Stoke*, which rates highly on my list of great unsung '80s gems that practically no one has seen. After this victory Barbara again lost her footing by taking over the title role in Larry Cohen's shamefully from hunger comedy *Wicked Stepmother* after an aged Bette Davis suddenly died a week or two into the shooting of the flick! Before you ask, the film itself is every bit as ungodly as the gloomy circumstances which lead to Ms. Carrera landing the gig would have you think. Following that debacle Barbara has plumbed further depths of no-turning-back cinematic stagnancy by acting in such unworthy projects as *Point of Impact*, *Trust*, and the made-for-cable horror pic *Sawbones*.

CORRINE CLERY Had the degrading got-naked-every-five-to-ten minutes title part in *The Story of O* and starred alongside Franco Nero and David Hess in the fantastic "danger on the road" psycho knock-out *Hitchhike* prior to acting in *Moonraker*. Following her 007 stint was also in *The Humonoid* with fellow Bond babe Barbara Bach and Richard "Jaws" Kiel. Career plummeted into all-out terminal turkeydom with the hilariously horrible post-nuke action clunker *Yow: The Hunter from the Future*. Last seen taking off her clothes in Lucio Fulci's tawdry erotic thriller *Dangerous Obsession*.

MARYAM O'ABO This attractively willowy blonde made her inauspicious film debut in the wonderfully wacky anything-goes *ALIEN* rip-off *Xtro* as a yummy French nu pair girl who twice removes her clothes. Following small roles in *Until September* and *White Knights*, Ms. O'Abó lucked out and snagged the love interest lead in *The Living Daylights*. After this triumph Maryam next acted in the John

Ashley-backed *Something Is Out There*, a completely cruddy sci-fi/horror mini-series that was an unexplainable ratings hit. A mercifully short-lived one season wonder TV series followed. After the show's abrupt cancellation Maryam's career predictably fell apart. She took it all off for an episode of Zalman King's stupendously shoddy soft-core exploitation cable series *Red Shoe Diaries*, plus likewise stripped down her birthday suit for such grievously rotten direct-to-video dreck as *Double Obsession*, *Tropical Heat*, and *Tamcot: Dangerous Desires*, the latter starring onetime *21 Jump Street* TV teen scream bunk turned perennial direct-to-video movie mainstay Richard Grieco (ominously enough, Mr. Grieco had previously toplined in the flop 007 spy spoof *If Looks Could Kill*, a dud that played a principal part in condemning Richard to interminable cable fare obscurity). Although D'Abó got to keep her clothes on in the chop-choy saga *Shootfighter: Fight to the Death*, the nightmarishly insipid big budget La Femme Nikita remake *Point of No Return*, and the psycho thriller *Skafed*, none of these films represents a valid return to sound form for the officially down and out Maryam.

SHIRLEY EATON

Curvaceous eye-fel Ms. Eaton made an indelible impression after being turned into a breathtakingly bronzed human statue in *Goldfinger*. Alas, acting in *Goldfinger* didn't prove to be a golden decision on Shirley's



part. Following her 007 stint Ms. Eaton was in veteran hack director Maury Dexter's automatically unmemorable *The Naked Brigade*, a tired-ass unimpeachable film adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians*, and both *The Girl from Rio* and *The Blood of Fu Manchu* for tireless Spanish 1-dredge-'em-up-right-from-the-celluloid-crudbucket moviemaker par excellence Jess Franco.

JULIE EGE Following her bit part as a Scandinavian girl in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* this mouth-wateringly full-figured Norwegian looker's thespic career was very hit or miss. Starring turns in the on-target Hammer films *Creatures the*

World Forgor and especially the seriously smokin' kung-fu bloodsucker corker *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* as well as a co-starring part in the splendidly sardonic post-nuke sci-fi black comedy smasheroo *The Final Programme* rate as Ms. Ege's biggest hits, while the lesser efforts *The Mutations*, *Percy's Progress*, *Think Dirty*, *Up Pompeii*, and *Cruze* qualify as Julie's most toxically off-target misses. Eventually quit acting altogether to become a nurse.

BRITT EKLAND Prior to acting in *The Man With the Golden Gun* this generously proportioned Swedish dish steamed up movie screens by an unforgettable torrid nude dance in the superlative British horror classic *The Wicker Man*. Britt also registered favorably in the equally fine features *Get Carter* and *Asylum*. But after her 007 stint Ms. Ekland's career went on a gradual, yet inexorable decline. The sadistic blaxploitation phlegmawad *Slavers*, the smutty comedy *Sex on the Run*, the insane anthology flick *The Monster Club*, and the soft-core sexploitation sludgeball *Love Scenes* put a stopper to Britt's previously pretty-up-to-snuff career, with the lowest point reached when she acted in the odious rapist ghost story *Demam Rong* alongside fellow erstwhile Bond babe Lana Wood. By the late '80s Ms. Ekland was goofing her way through Fred Olen Ray's unbearably morose horror comedy crapfest *Beverly Hills Vamp*.

ALIZA GUR Following her catfight scene with the redoubtable Martine Beswick in *From Russia With Love*, Ms. Gur's film career was similarly trounced, as such utterly inconsequential nothin' to get all stirred up about post-007 items as *Agent for H.A.R.M.*, *Tarzan and the Jungle Boy*, *Canst Girl*, and the especially blunt blood-sucker bilge *Beast of Morocco* all prove beyond a reasonable doubt.

TERI HATCHER Ms. Hatcher soared to immediate favorite-hottie-among-young-horny-guys fame when she made a big splash playing Lois Lane on *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*. Prior to this immense success Teri had done time on *The Love Boat* and had such cinematic boobos as the divinely stupid Sly Stallone/Kurt Russell buddy-buddy cop bonanza *Tonga and Cash*, the dreadfully dippy Dolly Parton dud *Straight Talk*, and the unwatchably boorish Andrew "Dice" Clay vehicle *Brainmasher*. A *Love Story* cluttering her spotty resume like a very grave untreated rash. One might assume that

appearing as the love interest in the 007 saga *Tomorrow Never Dies* would secure Ms. Hatcher's celluloid career as smooth sailing from there on. But that hasn't really been the case, for such subsequent film excursions as the failed crime opus *Two Days in the Valley* and the pedestrian comedy *Since You've Been Gone* are not exactly the stuff of which true classics are made. Currently Teri has found gainful employment doing TV commercials for Radio Shack and acted in the hit children's movie *Spy Kids*, so her career is doing alright for the moment.

GLORIA HENDRY Since *Live and Let Die* was at best essentially a big budget blaxploitation movie, it makes perfect sense that Ms. Hendry, a former model and Playboy Bunny who grew up in Newark, New Jersey, is most closely associated with that particular uniquely '70s low-down funky genre. Gloria's bang-up blax-



ploitation credits include starring roles in *Block Caesar*, *Hell Up in Harlem*, *Block Belt Jones*, *Savage Sisters* (Hendry shared the screen with Sid Haig, John Ashley and that Ginger girl Cheri Caffaro in this Filipino pearl), and *Slaughter's Big Rip-off* as well as secondary parts in *Across 110th Street* (her debut role) and *Bare Knuckles*. Unfortunately, Gloria wasn't happy toiling away in an endless succession of blaxploitation pics, so she stopped acting altogether after appearing in *Bare Knuckles*. Hendry finally returned to films with a small role in the strictly so-so direct-to-video sequel *Pumpkinhead II: Blood Wings*, but alas hasn't done anything since that minor comeback.

FAMKE JANSSEN This delectably leggy and statuesque Dutch former model turned actress rocked many a man's world with her fabulously flipped-out performance as a vivaciously loopy Russian nympho psycho bitch who crushes lucky guys to death between her literally and figuratively killer thighs in *GoldenEye*. Alas, Famke hasn't done so well with her follow-

up films. Robert Altman's disastrously dull *The Gingerbread Man*, the totally unexceptional romantic comedy *Love & Sex*, and the grossly unnecessary big budget *The House onHaunted Hill* remake are gonna be tough pics to live down. Worse still, the slambang, shoot-the-fireworks, outrageously gruesome and relentless H.P. Lovecraft on amphetamines monstermash blast *Deep Rising* met with an unfairly brutal critical reception and didn't make time out at the almighty box office, although yours truly personally loved this wild-ass go-for-broke skull-popper as if it was my own amiably retarded bastard stepson. Fortunately, Ms. Janssen rebounded from these failures with a decent co-starring gig in the terrific card-sharp gambling winner *Raiders* and recently toplined in the superhero smash *X-Men*, so for the time being her career ain't in no big trouble.

LYNN-HOLLY JOHNSON

The girlishly perky and pretty Ms. Johnson holds the dubious honor of being the youngest ever actress to tackle a starring role in a Bond film: Lynn-Holly was all of 20 when she acted in *For Your Eyes Only*. Prior to her 007 stint Ms. Johnson toplined in the maudlin four-hanky weepie *Ice Castles*. Ms. Johnson's post-Bond career slump began immediately with the dismally unscary Disney horror entry *The Watcher in the Woods*, in which she managed to hold her own with the ever-imposing Bette Davis. The jarringly bad and sniggering R-rated '84 remake of *Where the Boys Are* proved to be the deadly stake that really killed Lynn-Holly's career. The one-two double whammy sci-fi stinker punch of the lifeless *Alien Predator* and the faltering Filipino post-nuke pokebag *The Sisterhood* are very saddening sights to behold. Ditto the equally abominable busts *Angel River*, *Out of Sight-Out of Mind*, *Diggn' Up the Business*, and *Long Way Back*. Lynn-Holly Johnson eventually quit acting altogether shortly after turning 30.

GRACE JONES Prior to acting in *A View to a Kill* Grace Jones had already had a successful career in Europe as both a model and rock singer. Jones gave a thrilling performance in the otherwise pretty fuckin' sorry-ass sequel *Canan the Destroyer*. Grace followed her 007 stint by playing lethal, exotic, long-toothed Egyptian stripper vampire queen Katrina in the profoundly cool and entertaining horror black comedy plop *Vamp*. Then the inevitable post-007 career slump kicked in, as such subsequent stupendously unsightly cinematic blots on the landscape *Sirena*, *Straight to Hell*, and *Boomerang* grimly prove. Grace's sole

recent acting gig of note was in the CD-ROM game *Hell: A Cyberpunk Thriller*. Now probably best known as direct-to-video action star Dolph Lundgren's former better half.

CAROLINE MUNRO Like Martine Beswick before her the scrumptious Ms. Munro first earned her cult horror/fantasy queen stripes by acting in both *Dracula A.D. 1972* and *Captain Kronos: Vampire Hunter* for Hammer Studios. Caroline quickly solidified her status as a major hottie babe to reckon with by portraying the beautifully preserved corpse of Vincent Price's dead wife in the *Dr. Phibes* films as well as showing off her exceptionally shapely figure by wearing skimpy costumes in *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* and *At the Earth's Core*. Now one would think Munro's brief, but undeniably head-turning appearance as the head baddie's helicopter pilot in an eye-popping bikini in *The Spy Who Loved Me* would most certainly clinch Munro's ascent to tremendous breakthrough superstardom. Sadly, this was not to be. Caroline next acted in the delightfully dumb *Star Wars* rip-off *Starcrash* before becoming the luckless lust object of slobbering obsessive murderous lunatic Joe Spinell in the notoriously nasty gorefest *Maniac* and the laughably lousy *The Last Horror Film*. By the mid '80s Ms. Munro's once brightly glowing star was rapidly losing its brilliant shine: She did a cameo as herself singing on stage in a nightclub in the yucky yuletide yawnfest *Don't Open Until Christmas* and was badly misused in the lead in the similarly shabby slich'n'dice stiff *Slaughter High*. Later credits are just as disheartening: They include Jess Franco's *Faceless*, the Paul Naschy vehicle *Howl of the Devil*, and Luigi Cozzi's *The Black Cat*, where poor Caroline actually had to sue the cheapsteak no-account filmmakers in order to collect the full salary that was due to her! I had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Munro at a Chillerthon convention and found her to be a real sweetheart. I bought a picture of her as Naomi in *The Spy Who Loved Me* which she autographed with the following inscription: "To you Joe with love." Like I said, she's a very dear lady who should have had a much better and fuller career than the rather paltry one she's saddled with.

LUCIANA PALUZZI This deliciously voluptuous Italian knock-out established herself playing va-va-voomish sexpot roles in such varied pictures as *Seo Fury* and *Muscle Beach Party* before portraying fetching femme fatale Fiona Volpe in *Thunderball*. After that Ms. Paluzzi was hopelessly typecast as villainesses in spy

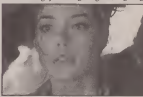
thrillers which include *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* spin-off feature *The Venetian Affair*. Come the late '60s Luciana's career went into a tailspin, with such resolutely downscale items as the goofy Japanese sci-fi monster gut-buster *The Green Slime*. Jess Franco's vile broads-behind-bars barfbag *99 Women*, the Jim Brown blaxploitation vehicle *Black Gunn*, the leering, catfight-laden Amazon honeys period actioner *War Goddess*, the staggeringly repellent *The Klansman*, and the rancidly raunchy Italian sex comedy wash-out *The Sensuous Nurse* (former original Bond babe Ursula Andress was the star of this one no less!) pockmarking her already splotchy resume like so many ugly zits.

TANYA ROBERTS Before gaining instant TV stardom and becoming a permanent part of many a libidinous teenage male's wildest wet dreams by playing one of the bountifully endowed crime-fighting jiggle vixens on *Charlie's Angels* the stunningly comely, dark-haired, husky-voiced Ms. Roberts paid her dues acting in the grimy '70s drive-in endeavors *Forced Entry*, *The Yum-Yum Girls*, and *Tourist Trap*. Tanya retained her sultry sexpot status by doing a nude pictorial for *Playboy*, then went on to obligingly bare her besutious breasts in both *The Beastmaster* and the monumentally hash league big budget box office bow-wow Sheena. Tanya's intolerably wimpy turn in *A View to a Kill* quite understandably failed to put her floundering career back on track. Instead, Ms. Roberts achieved a certain sordid status as that foxy chick who always takes it all off in such terminally tacky direct-to-video soft-core erotic thrillers as *Night Eyes*, *Inner Sanctum*, *Sins of Desire*, and *Deep Down*. The dissatisfyingly tame chicks-in-chains waste-of-celluloid *Purgatory* rates highly as perhaps Ms. Roberts' single most smelly-ass post-Bond misstep, although that particular point is open to a lot of debate. To add additional abject insult to already appalling injury, a couple of said schlockers were directed by chronically all-thumbs backmeister supremes Fred Olen Ray and Jim Wynorski! Not surprisingly, a justifiably disgusted Ms. Roberts quit acting altogether for several years. Tanya has recently resurfaced with a recurring co-starring part on the hit sitcom *That '70s Show*.

JOANNA PETTET Another Casino Royale cast member whose career went nowhere slowly after appearing in that often dissed fiasco. In the '70s Ms. Pettett acted in the odd cannibal opus *Welcome to Arrow Beach* and the vigorously mounted haunted house offering *The Evil*. Was briefly

a regular on the hit TV series *Knock Landing*. By the early '80s the best Joanna could do was a lead role in the by-the-numbers slasher mystery-thriller nonstarter *Double Exposure*. Hasn't done anything lately.

DENISE RICHARDS The awesomely ample-bodied Ms. Richards first caught male filmviewer's eyes with her starring turn in Paul Verhoeven's extravagantly over-the-top big budget sci-fi spectacle *Starship Troopers*, which laid a giant lead egg at the box office, but has since gone on to acquire an avid cult following. Prior to that flick Denise had made her decidedly less-than-showstopping thespic film debut in the absurdly imbecilic direct-to-video dodo *Tammy and the T-Rex*. Denise followed this uncertain start with the undeservedly maligned and hilariously vicious black comedy scream *Drop Dead Gorgeous*, which even boasts Adam West doing a hysterically funny send-up of himself! Ms. Richards then set innumerable male hearts aflutter and probably made said dudes seriously bleach their jeans when she removed her shirt so guys could get a good, lingering



look at her formidably fine knockers in the aptly titled *Wild Things*. Naturally, a showy part in the Bond pic *The World Is Not Enough* seemed like the logical next thing for Denise to do in order to solidify her stellar status as one juicy ripe tomato. Unfortunately, Ms. Richards' performance in the 007 outing met with uniformly hostile reviews from venomous asshole critics. Denise's career took a turn for the worse when she starred in the stomach-knottingly ghastly retro-'80s slasher abortion *Valentine*. Parts in such direct-to-video losers as the road movie *Tail Lights Fade* and the psycho thriller *Kill Shot* — Denise acts alongside fellow *Starship Troopers* veteran turned perennial late-night cable TV fire topline Casper Van Dien in the latter pic — followed thereafter. Resorted to parodying her own vacuous sexpot image in the addipated *Austin Powers*-style spy spoof *Undercover Brother*. Ms. Richards is perhaps best known at this present time as the gorgeous trophy babe wife of smarmy legendary Hollywood bad boy Charlie Sheen.

JILL ST. JOHN After playing the lead in *Diamonds Are Forever* Ms. St. John's previously flourishing career all but sputtered



and died. Prior to her 007 stint Jill had such films as *Summer Love*, *The Lost World* remake, *The Oscar*, and *Tony Rome* to her credit. Ms. St. John's post-James Bond pics are few and far in between. They include the unpleasantly violent revenge thriller *Sitting Target*, the muddled political satire *The Act*, the scary women-in-prison potholer *The Concrete Jungle*, and a cameo as herself in Robert Altman's scathing *The Player*.

TALISA SOTO You would think that after her 007 stint as Robert Davi's much-abused and mistreated kept mistress in *License to Kill* that this fashion model turned actress's career might be going places. Instead Ms. Soto's career went straight down the ol' shitter when she decided to essay the titular part in Jim Wynorski's unforgivably cheap'n'chintzy made-for-cable movie travesty of the widely admired comic book heroine *Vampirella*.

LANA WOOD There's a very telling and prophetic moment in *Diamonds Are Forever* in which '70s grindhouse movie icon Sid Haig tosses Lana Wood out of a high-rise hotel window. Symbolically this scene is quite chilling, for just like her ill-fated character Plenty O'Toole Ms. Wood's career took a severe plunge into that festering sinkhole known as the sudden dead-end from which there is no return after acting in this 007 outing. Moreover, being the big-busted sister of much beloved actress Natalie Wood sure didn't help matters any. Lana suffers from what I call Celebrity Sibling Syndrome, an often incurable and unconquerable malady in which the afflicted can neither equal nor surpass the fame and respect their more successful brother or sister amassed before them. Granted, Lana was amusing as a flaky psychic in the immensely fun car chase romp *Speedtrap* and gave a creditable performance in Charles B. Pierce's nicely done Western *Graveyard*. However, she was simply pitiful in the hideously slushy soap opera melodrama *A Place Called Today*, which co-starred that Ginger girl Cherri Caffaro. Furthermore, Ms. Wood hit her career nadir when she played a luckless woman who's repeatedly raped by an aggressively horny male ghost in the wholly wretched *Demon Rage*, which also features fellow former Bond babe Britt Ekland. By the early '80s Lana Wood's flash-in-the-pan thespian career was over for good.

Now, as the alarmingly abundant evidence on display unarguably shows acting in a James Bond movie rates along with picking your nose in public, letting your underwear hair grow out for all the world to see, and screaming "I love Bin Laden" in a room full of Marines as something no sane, sensi-

ble, of sound mind and spirit woman should ever do. Personally, I panicked when I heard Halle Berry's starring in the latest James Bond film. Sure, she recently copped a Best Actress Oscar for her stand-out performance in *Monster's Ball*, but that in reality doesn't mean jack shit. Mira Sorvino got the statuette for *Mighty Aphrodite* and she still wound up squandering her talents in such subsequent cinematic offal as *Mimic* and *The Replacement Killers*. And when was the last time you saw *My Cousin Vinny*'s Marisa Tomei in a high profile major mainstream release premiering at your local multiplex this Friday? I rest my case. I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if Ms. Berry winds up acting in some shit-ass skanky slasher woofier, a comparably crappy direct-to-video erotic thriller sharing the screen with either Richard Grieco or Casper Van Dien, or, worst of all, an overblown "nobody wanted it" big budget remake of an unmatchably fantastic movie a year or so after her 007 stint. If this does indeed happen, don't act surprised when you tell me all about it. Besides, Halle meets two key prerequisites for post-James Bond career crash and burn: She's a onetime model and beauty contest winner (Ms. Teen USA of 1987) who co-starred alongside former Bond babe Pamme Janssen in *X-Men* and popped her top in the execrable big budget floppola *Swordfish*. As we all should know by now, then James Bond movies got one helluva horrendously dire hex on 'em. Especially if you're a lovely young actress just itching to make a dent in movies. Take my advice: stick to community theater. It may not pay so good and it sure ain't glamorous, but in the long run it'll prove to be markedly less painful and embarrassing than the grueling career downward spiral you'll experience by acting in a 007 film.

THE BIJOU COLLECTABLES

116 E. Amerige Ave. Fullerton, CA 92832

Phone (714) 680-8799 Fax (714) 992-4568

web site: BIJOUCOLLECTABLES.COM

e-mail: bijoumedia@aol.com

TUE-SAT: 11am to 6pm SUN: Noon to 5pm

8X10 PHOTOS
MOVIE POSTERS
ROCK POSTERS
MEMORABILIA
AND LOTS, LOTS
MORE!

LOOK
FOR OUR
FREE 8-PAGE FULL
COLOR CATALOG IN THE
NEXT ISSUE OF
CULT MOVIE
MAGAZINE.

WWW.BIJOUCOLLECTABLES.COM

CULT MOVIES

I CAN'T SEE HIM IN THIS ROLE



Continuity in the *Invisible Man* Films

The Invisible Man (1933) _____
The Invisible Man Returns (1940) _____
The Invisible Woman (1940) _____
Invisible Agent (1942) _____
The Invisible Man's Revenge (1944) _____
Abbott and Costello Meet the Invisible Man (1951) _____

Part Three of the "Continuity in the Universal Universe" Series

BY DON MANKOWSKI

Tonight's topic is Griffin, the Invisible Man.

(No, I don't mean Merv Griffin, although he is difficult to see. Today, he's behind the scenes, a prolific producer of such popular, intelligent television shows as *Jeopardy!*, and even more popular, stupid ones like *Wheel of Fortune*. But he once had an on-camera presence when he frequently hosted talk and variety shows in the 1960s. I mean, he'd embarrass Arthur Treacher, he'd sing with Jerry Lewis, he'd play the piano for Steve and Edie, he'd joke with Bob Hope. Ethel Merman's big mouth, Karl Malden's big nose, Victor Buono's big gut, Zsa Zsa Gabor's big . . . , were all fair game. But alas, so long as a certain Johnny Carson was the competition, hardly anybody knew that Merv was on. Merv, there was an emcee; but Johnny, why 'e was an emcee-squared, as Einstein might have put it.)

Although Merv might indeed qualify, our man is Dr. Jack Griffin. One of Universal Studios' great golden-age horror characters was the Invisible Man. Check that, they were the Invisible Men. No, the Invisible Person. And pets. Actually, the invisibility serum itself was the thread for a series of films. And, keeping to my now-established style, I'll be discussing these films in terms of both their internal consistency (not too bad) and their real-world plausibility (close to zero, but please read on).

In 1933, Universal released *The Invisible Man*, an adaptation of H.G. Wells' classic novella of 1897. Dedicated scientist Dr. Jack Griffin (Wells didn't give him a doctorate, nor even a Christian name) develops and tests a drug that renders him invisible. Alas, the drug has side effects, much like those modern pharmaceuticals with the elaborate disclaimers. Monocane's would read (in upbeat voice): Warning! Monocane® is not for everyone. May cause heartburn, hair loss, dizziness, frequent urination, erectile dysfunction, hyperactivity, megalomania and insanity. Do ask your doctor if Monocane® is right for you!

Screenwriter R.C. Sheriff turned in a tense condensation of the Wells story. Whereas H.G.'s Griffin was a born psychopath, Sheriff conceived the idea that the drug should induce his megalomania. Director James Whale took it from there, beginning (as did Wells) with the muffled stranger trudging through the snow to lping, then moving along without lomp.

As Griffin, Claude Rains reads some superb lines in his impressive voice (which, in my opinion, ranks up there with John Carradine's and Boris Karloff's). The early sound equipment fails utterly to match Rains' vocal range, responding with impotent static when Rains intones "Power . . . to make the

world grovel at my feet!" Griffin feels he can use invisibility as a weapon of terror, to ultimately rule his domain, and sell his secret to whomever wants to "sweep the world with invisible armies." He gets to play flamboyant prinks, throw money around (literally), and "may even wreck a train or two." But he suffers the fate of the presumptuous when Nature's own winter conditions bring him low: the snows that gave him to us reclaim him by revealing his footsteps.

Wearing originally an unkempt wig and a rubber nose along with his goggles and artificially-arranged facial bandages, Griffin turns in later scenes to dark glasses and *gawse* alone, establishing this as standard issue for invisible men. The special effects are frequently no more than remotely operated doors, gates or drapes plus cast choreography, and are quite effective when augmented by Rains' mutterings or rants. However, cinematographic genius John P. Fulton made use of masked negative and multiple exposure to an effect stunning in the 1930s even if it appears rather ragged today. (E.g., outlines bleed a bit, and you can't see the back of Griffin's collar behind his invisible neck.)

Rains, who is seen only in the film's final take, is rather stiffly supported by Henry Travers as his mentor, William Harrigan as the

slimy Dr. Kemp, and Gloria Stuart as Flora, the Invisible Man's wistful love interest. No matter as Rains and the quirky bit actors carry the show. As the story is set in the British countryside, Whale's very odd supporting players (Una O'Connor et al.) are more at home here than they are in Transylvania or Switzerland or wherever the Frankenstein pictures are set. Memorable are the officials' ambitious but hopeless tactics against the invisible man, and his implausible stalking of his betrayer, Kemp.

The invisible man becomes visible upon his death; the attending physicians fully anticipate that he effect of the drugs will die with him. The invisibility process must be a dynamic one, highly dependent upon blood circulation or breathing.

Let Me Make One Thing Perfectly Clear

The Invisible Man has a scientific origin (a la Frankenstein) rather than a supernatural (Dracula, The Wolf Man, The Mummy). However, Griffin's premise is just as furbelowed as Frankenstein's, probably more so.

We are, you and I, connoisseurs of the fantastic. I think it incumbent upon us when discussing a fantastic film, to at least pause to assess its real-world plausibility. Some things, like human vampires changing into bats can be dismissed outright, and the pause isn't a long one. Something that advertises itself as science fiction deserves a bit more scrutiny.

To make a substance transparent, one must drastically rearrange its molecules, and you simply can't torture living cells in such a fashion and still maintain their life functions. The closest that nature comes to achieving this is in the cornea of the mammalian eye. This is one living tissue that has to get by without a direct blood supply, as even the tiniest blood vessels would get in the way and render it non-transparent. The cornea gets its nutrients via diffusion from neighboring cells, and has its wastes carried away by the same process; this is something that simply won't work for any tissue much larger than the cornea. And transparency isn't quite enough, of course: we can detect glass or ice unless the lighting is such that none of it is scattered in any way.

There is just no conceivable way in which to make living tissue (bone, muscle, etc.) transparent, and at the same time keep it functional. Someone with no skin pigmentation would have no protective sunburn, but the invisible man needn't fear sunburn so long as the rays are passing through his flesh without reflection. But what's one body part that absolutely requires its pigmentation to function? The retina of the eye. Make that transparent and it doesn't reflect an image to the brain any longer. A truly transparent man would be blind as well, and that much less a menace.

Transparent Arguments

If true and perfect transparency isn't attainable, what other ways are there to become invisible? I can think of a few.

Camouflage. Our man changes color to fit the background. Of course, to be thus invisible from both directions, Griffin might have to resemble factory brickwork on his front side, green grass and an evening sky on his rear (which would lend a twist to a line like "Even the moon's frightened of me! Frightened to death. The whole world's frightened to death"). Some living creatures, certain fish and lizards, can do this, and rather well, but not perfectly. It's of little help when you're in motion, or when the observers are. And when an invisible man is about, guarantee that somebody's going to be moving.



Relativity. Simply arrange for the bending of light rays around an object. Dr. Einstein told us that light rays would be indeed warped in the presence of great masses, and damn if he wasn't right. Stars that can be observed near our sun during solar eclipses aren't seen quite exactly where we know them to be, the sun's mass has altered the path of their light. Suppose that the surface of Griffin's skin has acquired the property of deflecting light around him so that each observer sees what's behind him perfectly focused. (Well, almost perfectly. It apparently can't focus too closely behind him, hence his invisible collar-back.) I'd guess that a great deal of energy would be involved here, and from where it comes, who knows? Besides, anything inside Griffin's skin ought to remain invisible. Yet, he tells us that food he has eaten recently remains visible until digested. This would indicate that Griffin's invisible cells assimilate the visible compounds and render these transparent, or maybe his body concentrates the pigments and excretes them, but I really don't want to think about that too much. (Oddly, smoke from Griffin's cigars is visible when expelled, but not while within his lungs.) Clothes, outside the skin, interfere with the optical properties and must be dispensed with

for the full effect.

Suggestion, something like mass hypnosis. Perhaps Griffin's brain is constantly emanating orders to other minds not to notice him. It even works while he's sleeping (as happens in the movie), but not after he's dead. We'd expect him to go mad sooner or later, given all that brain activity. Isn't this how The Shadow achieved invisibility, by clouding men's minds? It must be a hell of a lot easier on the radio. This wouldn't explain why Griffin has to strip off to be invisible, or how smoke, dust or paint show up on him - unless the confidence that such methods imbue in the observer somehow gets through the mental screen. (Writer Ralph Ellison used the title *Invisible Man* for his acclaimed first novel in 1952. His invisible man is an American Black as viewed by White society.)

As we can see, there are problems with each alternative explanation. No, we are told by several learned scientists, in this picture as well as the sequels, that the drug monocane has bleaching properties, that it turns creatures white when injected, and that Griffin has somehow refined it to the point where it renders living tissue not only colorless, but non-reflective. Fair enough. The laws of physics are different in the Universal Universe. Remember that H.G. Wells was devoted to science as well as to fiction. He knew when to let the former go so as not to interfere with a great story. Wells tells us that there are a lot of things that are virtually invisible, such as jellyfish, microbes, or the wind; and that most creatures are made up of mostly transparent tissues with just a few pigments in them. He almost convinces us that the leap to true invisibility is a short one. Almost.

Unhappy Returns

When Universal got around to a sequel of sorts, they created a new invisible man rather than dusting off the old one (after all, invisible men are sensitive to dust). The *Invisible Man Renews* (1940) starred Vincent Price, in maybe his fourth-ever featured role, if you can believe that. Price plays Sir Geoffrey Radcliffe who, although innocent, is under sentence of death for the murder of his brother. Geoffrey disappears prior to his execution, quite literally.

It transpires that he's had the assistance of Dr. Frank Griffin, no less than the younger brother of Jack "The Invisible Man" Griffin. Each having lost a brother under extreme circumstances, it's appropriate that these two should unite. Sutton underplays nicely, a very believable boring scientist. His family relationship is punctuated with a dossier - "maniac/murderer" - photograph of Claude Rains, who thus has almost as much visible screen time here as in the earlier film! We learn that it's nine years since Jack Griffin employed an East Indian herb to render himself invisible, and that the scientist apparently re-christened his improved monocane as "duocane."

Inspector Sampson (Cecil Kellaway) of

QUILT MOVIES

Scotland Yard is always one step behind Radcliffe. His seemingly careless cigar about Griffin's laboratory is a literal attempt to smoke Radcliffe out. Meanwhile, Geoffrey, done up in bandages and goggles like his predecessor, is hiding out with girlfriend Helen Manson (Nan Grey). There develops a sense of urgency, as he's clearly being overtaken by madness, and must solve the case of his brother's murder while he still can.

He escapes the inspector in the nick of time and in the expected fashion. "Take off 'is clothes?" says the local policeman in phone conversation. "E won't do that sir ... there's a lady with 'im." Within minutes, it's "E took off 'is clothes! No wonder she fainted!" Writer Curt Siodmak and director Joe May try to give us some James Whale-ish characters.

Throughout, rain, mist and smoke pose problems for Radcliffe, although he turns it to his advantage at one point: with all of the police clad in gas masks, he is able to escape disguised as one of them. Note that whenever we encounter a cat, it serves to distract the lawmen and cover the invisible man's tracks. But count upon the dog to sniff him out.

Geoffrey discovers that the true murderer of his brother is Richard Cobb (Cedric Hardwicke), and sets out to prove it while evading recapture by the police. Radcliffe catches up to Cobb in a dangerous spot on a coast-loading mechanism. The invisible man is wounded by gunfire, and Cobb dies, but - rather decently of him - not before confessing to the murder.

There's a scene where Geoffrey steals rugged clothing from an equally forlorn scarecrow that comes closest to echoing the relentless pessimism of the Wells original. Along with whatever advantages that invisibility may bestow, one inevitable becomes a wounded, hungry, raked outcast. The invisible man staggers back to Griffin's care and into custody.

Griffin, who must be a medical doctor as well as a biochemist, wants to operate to save Geoffrey's life, but can hardly do so without being able to see his patient. He's about to try a rather risky antidote when it is discovered that a preliminary blood transfusion was in itself sufficient to restore Geoffrey's visibility. It appears that the just acquitted Geoffrey will survive. (One wonders whether Jack Griffin could have been restored to normalcy via the same means, but never considered so simple a solution.)

Mr. Price had not, at this stage of his career, settled into his familiar overplaying persona; it's just the fact that Geoffrey is clearly going crazy almost from the start that gives us this particular sense of déjà vu. Or should I say, *posterior* *vu*, things subsequently seen? Price appeared, or rather disappeared again in the brief flicker to 1948's *Abbot and Costello Meet Frankenstein*; there, he lent his voice to a disembodied cigarette.

Disaffection Disappearance

Kitty Carroll is a model, working for a pedantic and tyrannical boss. She hates this situation so much that she volunteers to help the eccentric Professor Gibbs test his just-developed invisibility process. While the earlier *Invisible Man* films resorted often to quirky humor, *The Invisible Woman* (1940) is an out-and-out comedy.

Professor Gibbs is no Griffin. Oh, he's crazy all right, but harmlessly so. His inventions include such things as a self-driving car. His invisibility serum must be supplemented by exposure to a weird spark-crackling apparatus in his Bde-of-Frankenstein style laboratory.

The professor's benefactor is one Dick Russell, once a playboy, now bankrupt (and if he has to live off his wife, he'll clearly remain so). No, the invisibility treatment is not his last hope. A quartet of not-very-bright international criminals is also after his newest invention, hoping to use it for dishonest purposes. I hope that you can see where all of this is leading.

Kitty gets the treatment and emerges invisible. She'll serve the cause of science in good time, but first must take care of Mr. Growley, her execrable employer. After a swift kick in the keester and a few ghost-inspired invisible tricks, Growley turns into the very model of a modern model mogul, considerate of all concerned.

But in the meantime, the tough *snugs* have stolen the professor's invention. Kitty's treatment has worn off (she nicely materializes legs-first), and things look grim. But, not to worry, it turns out that when the lady consumes alcohol, she disappears again. (In fact, there's a very odd scene wherein everybody but the legendary boozier Barrymore is drunk.) And so, with invis-Kitty as the catalyst, the professor, the playboy, and his long-suffering gentleman's gentleman are able to round up the miscreants. Marital happiness for Kitty and Dick, more adventure for the professor.

Virginia Bruce plays Kitty, and John Howard is Richard. Marin Montez, a future star, has a small role as one of the other models. John Barrymore, at the end of a celebrated film career, plays the professor. It's more of a Lionel Barrymore role, but brother John gets by. And the rest of the cast is all that one could ask: Charlie Ruggles as the very proper but pitiful-prone valet, Margaret "Wicked Witch of the West" Hamilton as the housekeeper, and Oscar Homolka and Shemp (The Other Third Stooge) Howard as the bad guys. Siodmak and May scripted again. A. Edward Sutherland, a comedic director (he'd worked with Laurel and Hardy as well as Abbott and Costello), got the assignment, and gave us a fun picture.

The final scene introduces Dick and Kitty's newborn baby. When messaged with rubbing alcohol, the tyke disappears. "Hereditary!" muses the dotty professor.

Hardly, but it has been established that the invisibility machinery minus the serum induces soprano voices in tough guys, so it might very well affect the genitals. But we're probably not supposed to be thinking about that, now are we?

Young Soldiers Fade Away Too

It's 1942 and America, like most of the world, is at war. Frank Raymond, the proprietor of a small New York print shop becomes a target for a group of German and Japanese agents. Why? Raymond's true name is Griffin, and he's the grandson of the original Invisible Man! The Axis bad guys want the invisibility formula. So begins *Invisible Agent*.

Young Griffin (Jon Hall) is persuaded to join the war effort, uses the formula to achieve invisibility, and parachutes behind the German lines. His assignment is to liberate a list of Japanese spies from the Germans. Nazi officers Cedric Hardwicke and J. Edward Broome and Japanese villain Peter Lorre make things difficult for Griffin, but with the aid of Maria Sorenson, a British spy played by lovely Ilona Massey, he manages to cause enough internal conflict amongst the enemies (who prefigure their Nazi counterparts from Hogan's Heroes at times) to accomplish his goals. Frank and Maria escape in a stolen bomber!

Agent (scripted again by Siodmak and directed by Edward L. Mearns) is certainly a change of pace, and as you've undoubtedly noticed, boasts a fine cast, although it borders on the ridiculous all too often. At least you won't see Frank kicking Hitler in the ass, although I understand that such a scene was almost filmed.

The invisible Frank Raymond-Griffin seems to suffer from no mental problems (if you don't count some rather stiff acting) associated with his grandfather's formula. As this is without doubt the 1940s, Jack Griffin's experiments must be retrofitted to the turn of the century (as Wells had it), with Geoffrey Radcliffe's episode with the earlier Frank Griffin taking place about 1910.

The most alarming thing here is the reference to Frank as Jack Griffin's grandson. When did Jack Griffin find time to beget any offspring? No previous marriages are mentioned, and his relationship with Flora seems a very "proper" one in the classic sense. He used to be a poor chemist, and felt unworthy of her. Thereafter he's a *raginf* freak, and hence still unworthy. When Jack was running amuck, dealing out mischief if not exactly terror, grabbing hats and bicycles and "gathering nuts in May," did he do a few other things they wouldn't let us see? That "Raymond" name that Frank uses might be that of his legitimate parents, or of his illegitimate granny.

You will recall that Universal's Frankenstein sequels of the early 1940s took place in western and central Europe with no

apparent regard for the War. It's rather difficult to imagine the Mummy, the Monster or the Wolf Man used effectively in a wartime setting. In his 1943 short story "The Devil is Not Mocked," Manly Wade Wellman had Dracula punish invading Nazis, but I don't think that a heroic vampire would have been a viable movie property in that era. The Invisible Man, however, was a versatile concept, one that could be exploited for heroism or comedy as well as for villainy.

Vengeance Exaggerated

Jon Hall would shortly portray yet another invisible man named Griffin. Attempting to branch out from his usual heroic roles, Hall assayed the role of Robert Griffin in *The Invisible Man's Revenge*, and got above-the-title billing for his trouble. His sinister pencil mustache should tip you off, but really there's no ambiguity here: this fellow is labeled early on (via a newspaper clipping) as a "homicidal maniac."

After war and comedy, I think that an Invisible Man western ("The Invisible Seven") or musical ("The Invisible Molly Brown") would have been the next logical step, but here we're back to the Universal "B" horror formula. Ford Beebe produced and directed this 1944 effort; like Hall's, his background was in "action" pictures.

Rob Griffin has just escaped from a Capetown asylum, killing some three staff people in the process, and has stowed away on a ship back to London (he cuts himself out of a large bag, a Caesarian rebirth). It seems that old cronies Jasper and Irene Herrick (played by Lester Mathews and Gail Sondergaard) descended him in the jungles of Tanganyika five years earlier, and kept the spoils of a diamond mine. Griffin demands their estate, and their daughter as well.

Jasper and Irene drug Griffin and eject him. A bum named Irvy Iggins, or, Herbie Higgins that is, rescues a drowning Griffin and becomes his reluctant partner, with echoes of Mister Marvel from the original novel. (Herbie even attempts to assert Griffin's rights with legal arguments, but is given the bum's rush himself.)

Where does the invisible man fit in? I'm coming to that. If Rob Griffin is indeed any relation to the Griffins of the earlier films, he's unaware. Indeed, the shared name appears to be coincidental; the name has nice mythological connotations, even if unrelated to invisibility. If there's any Jack Griffin relation around and about, it's the eccentric scientist Dr. Drury, upon whose secluded house the outcast Griffin stumbles.

No one could play a proud, aloof, slightly crazy scientist like John Carradine. "Pioneers

have always had to contend with fools. Look at Galileo, Pasteur. Who believed Curie, except his wife? What about Ehrlich?" Curie's wife, eh? Drury doesn't think to mention that she was an even smarter scientist. "Have you ever studied optical density and molecular physics? No? Too bad."

Drury explains that he can lower the refractive index of a living object. "The problem," says the doc, "was to find a formula... a geometric expression involving four dimensions - for use on tissues." This particular hoflegab is lifted from the Wells text, and implies that Drury somehow came into possession of the original Griffin's notebooks. In an epic understatement, Drury concludes, "Now if a man were invisible, he'd be hard to find."

Drury's looking for "a man without a friend," and Griffin fits the job description. Griffin is inspired by the story of Drury's dog, Brutus. Purebred dogs used to gang up on the mongrel, we are told, but he has since enjoyed invisible revenge. However touching the affinity, Griffin and the hound will be adversaries from then on. Don't trust a mutt named for an assassin. (Drury also has an invisible parrot, Methuselah.)

Griffin accepts the injection, breaks into the crazy laugh almost at once, and promptly fades away. "An invisible man!" exults the always assured Drury. "Archimedes, Copernicus, Faraday, Darwin - now I am immortal." Drury wants scientific acclaim - he's just about ready to publish for Pete's sake - Griffin wants his revenge. Is Griffin MAD? He does say "Hah! Me worry?" just before knocking out Drury and venturing out.

The invisible thug hides out with Herbie, and in a comical sequence, helps the cockney dude clean up in a match of darts against a braggart. More importantly, he convinces the Herricks via threats to sign over their holdings to him.

Griffin now wants to regain his visibility, in order to claim the Herrick's daughter Julie (Evelyn Ankers, rather wasted in this very minor role). Dr. Drury explains that only the total transfusion of another man's blood can accomplish this - another dog had to die so that Brutus could be restored to visibility. The unctuous Drury is not a murderer, and attempts to betray Griffin to the police, with the expected result: Griffin uses Drury's corpuses, performing the transfusion by himself, which cannot be too easy a process. (Evidently, Griffin hasn't seen *The Ghost of Frankenstein*, as he doesn't worry about any blood-type incompatibilities.) Oh yes, the dog escapes as Griffin burns the house.

Under an alias, Griffin has taken over the Herrick house. The Drury serum must be stronger than the old one, as Griffin begins to fade away at the most inopportune moment, while he's trying to charm Julie at dinner. After a scrap in an old wine-cellar, Griffin sets out to

drain the blood of Julie's boyfriend Mark, but is thwarted about halfway through the process by the vengeful Brutus, who chows down upon his bleached, semi-visible neck. (Why does Brutus remain visible instead of fading like Griffin? Has he been drinking the blood of innocent dogs all the while? Sounds like a better horror story going on offscreen.)

"We've nothing to fear from the invisible man - he's dead," intones Sir Frederick the inspector (Leland Hodgson). "And judgment was passed on him by a higher court than ours." Oh was it now? Act of dog, I'd say, but maybe he's dyslexic. Although he's lost half his blood, a cup of tea has poor Mark right as rain in the finale, which gives the last words to Herbie.

It's an appropriate ending for a picture that is at best a rather sad bag of old bits of business. I just loved this film when I was about eight years old, I suppose because of its busy yet simple-minded plot and the avenging dog, but my opinion has, shall we say, mellowed. Without Carradine, the film might rate an "unwatchable" verdict. It's a curious story, with no admirable characters. *Revenge* writer Bertram Millhauser did several Sherlock Holmes scripts for Universal, but curiously not the one where Basil Rathbone gets his blood drained, then recovers smartly.

Much like Universal's "Mummy" series (which I discussed in *Cult Movies* #34), their "Invisible" series began with a no-questions-asked classic, moved through distinctly inferior sequels, and ended with an Abbott and Costello outing. However, you'd have to admit that the in-betweens showed a lot more variety in this case. Much of the credit for the middle pictures must go to John Fulton and David Horsley for their special effects, and Curt Siodmak for his scripts.

A Little Aqueous Hamor

Universal had revived a pair of flugging franchises when it teamed the comedy duo of Bud Abbott and Lou Costello with three of their classic monsters in 1948's literally-titled *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. The film is fondly remembered, because against all odds, they assembled a good comedy and a good horror film (featuring the definitive Wolf Man and Dracula), and deftly merged the two elements. This assured some imitations, and these were not quite so successful. Abbott and Costello's encounter with an invisible man occurred three years later.

Bud Alexander and Lou Francis (guess who and guess who) are detective school graduates, and their first client is Tommy Nelson, a middleweight boxer who is accused of murdering his manager. (The police description says that he's 165 pounds, which would make him a light-heavyweight, but we'll assume that he can make the weight when necessary.) I wouldn't call him punch drunk, but Tommy (played by Arthur Franz, later a mainstay in sf pictures) puts 'em up at the sound of any bell.

CULT MOVIES



Tommy's girlfriend Helen (Nancy Guild) wants her uncle, Dr. Phillip Gray (Gavin Muir) to give Tommy the invisibility serum and a chance to clear himself. Gray credits Dr. John Griffin with the discovery of the drug, which he calls "priptisane." Well, that's how the closed captions spell it, but maybe the scriptwriters were thinking "triticane," a logical successor to monocyte and duocene. A framed photo of Claude Rains, who "willed" Gray the formula,



punctuates the relationship. It probably makes Raines the Universal All-Time photo appearance champion. In addition to his "invisible" heritage, Raines' mug shot also adorned *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* as the late Sir John Talbot. Special effects fans please note, they still haven't conquered the invisible rear collar, so it's time to forgive John Fulton.

Gray refuses to administer the drug, citing the inevitable madness that will result, but the desperate Tommy injects himself. Danged if he doesn't start laughing hysterically right off. His maniacal mouth-ing-off gets so loud in a restaurant that Bud must impersonate a Shakespearean ranting drunk to provide cover. (No acting award due here: Abbott was reputed a stalwart drinker.)

Attention focuses upon fight-fixing mobster Morgan, played by Sheldon Leonard, whose picture must surely accompany Webster's entry on "gangster." With Tommy's invisible help, Lou convincingly impersonates a fast-handed fighter who can tattoo the punching bag without even looking. This earns "Louie the Looper" a fight with middleweight contender Rocky Hanlon. (Costello did have some experience as an amateur boxer, and throws the requisite punches convincingly amidst his clowning.)

Hanlon can't quite handle the unseen fists of Tommy Nelson augmenting Lou's own fail-

ing efforts. The slapstick boxing match features about two dozen knockdowns, most for a count of nine, with each fighter strangely sent to his own corner during the count.

The double-crossed thugs are about to whack Bud and Lou, when Tommy rescues them, and Morgan is arrested for the earlier murder. The newly acquired Tommy has suffered a serious knife wound, and requires a transfusion from Lou; for once, somebody checked the blood groups, and he was the best match. Now it is safe for Tommy to receive the invisibility antidote. (Everybody in the script refers to this drug rather solemnly as "the reagent," as if it means "counter-agent" or something like that. To a chemist, it simply means something that reacts, i.e., almost anything.) However, there's some backflow of blood, and Lou turns invisible long enough for some (really dumb) final gags.

Meet the Invisible Man is not quite as good as *Meet Frankenstein*, but is better than the later entries in the *A & C Meet...* sub-series, so vintage is a good guide here.

Faces You Have Seen Before

Save for Jack Griffin's photographic image, there are no recurring characters in the six films, at least none that I can detect. Other than Jon Hall, Cedric Hardwicke is the only actor to play two significant roles (Cobb in *Returns*, Stauffer in *Agent*). John Carradine, a major figure in *Revenge*, did a bit part in the original *Man*. Others appearing twice are supporting or walk-on players Jimmy Aubrey, Billy Bevan, and Leyland Hodgson (all in *Returns* and *Revenge*); Forrester Harvey and Harry Stubbs (both in *Man* and *Returns*); Mary Gordon (*Returns* and *Woman*); and Holmes Herbert (*Man* and *Agent*). Be my guest if you want to try to connect any of their characters, I can't. They were simply right for a role, twice.

See-Through Man Sees It Through

Back in the sixties and seventies, our local television station wouldn't show any of the *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* or *Wolf Man* pictures in the daytime, probably fearing the wrath of the parents should the kids see these and get scared. I remember that one station dared to show *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* about 8:30 p.m., and there was a parental outcry, even though the film is nominally a comedy. The ban only applied to the classic films, by the way: the American-International horror films were an after-school staple for us. Michael Landon's wolf man was welcome, Lon Chaney's was not.

However, the Universal *Invisible Man* films could be shown. I'm not sure of the logic here, but it was probably something along the lines of: who's going to complain about the kids seeing some monster that you can't see anyway? There's that paradox with which we've been playing all along. If they'd realized that he was necessarily naked when invisible, I wonder what that fact would have done to the logic.

A Vanishing Breed

After Universal gave up on it, *The Invisible Man* concept would be sporadically revived; there were television series and television remakes, but nothing that has endured beyond the curiosity stage.

It's odd that a quintessentially British menace like the Invisible Man was not the subject of a Hammer Films treatment in the 1960s. But then, Hammer relished putting new faces on the old reliables, and here couldn't find a face for a makeover.

A recent revamping was *Hollow Man*, starring Kevin Bacon. It features the special effects as they always should have been done, all serving a transparently trashy slasher script. Kevin's disappearances and reappearances do logically begin in the bloodstream and proceed to the denser tissues, and the process wreaks proper havoc upon other bodily systems. But all too often he's presented as flayed musculature, truly a slab of Bacon with (shem) sixth-degree burns. As for his invisible man indulging in voyeurism and rape, that's all too cheap and sadly believable.

Where's Billy Crystal When You Need Him?

If you judge a film's value by its Academy Award recognition - not something I'd exactly recommend - then the "Invisible" films were truly shining lights of the Universal Horror Universe. Although there was no comparable award in 1932, *Returns*, *Woman* and *Agent* garnered nominations for John Fulton's special effects in consecutive years (1940, 1941 and 1942). Fulton would later carry away the top prize for other efforts in 1945 and 1956, the latter for recreating all of the Plagues in *The Ten Commandments*.

Not only does the invisible role call for an actor of great vocal presence and the ability to mime beneath the bandages, it demands acting ability in the remainder of the company, as they must believably react to nothing. The actors we've discussed were also Academy standouts: Claude Rains would go on to be nominated for other supporting roles four times. I'm chagrined to find neither Vincent Price nor John Carradine so recognized, although Cecil Kellaway was offered upon two occasions (I won't even get into the record of John Barrymore's honored siblings). Most remarkable, fully 65 years after her *Invisible Man* performance, Gloria Stuart was nominated as supporting actress.

Hidden Meaning

I'd like to close with something like "Watch the skies ... keep watching the skies!" but in this case, watching is futile. Don't worry about concealed weapons. Put the blame on Raines, it's a *Whale of a Price* we pay.

The invisible man combines dreams of power with fear of the unseen. He remains the perfect science fiction monster.

Monsters inc. A M O N G U S

Horror, Sci-Fi, Model,
Toy & Film Expo #3

JANUARY 4-5
2003

SATURDAY 10AM-5PM • SUNDAY 10AM-4PM

FIRST MAJOR SHOW OF THE YEAR! COME JOIN THE PARTY!
\$15 per day • Children 12 & under FREE with paying Adult!
for info call (734) 242-6885 or www.monstersamongus.com



Don't Miss
The WEST COAST'S
PREMIER SHOW

Celebrity Guests • Q&A's
Autographs • Collectibles
Films & Videos All Weekend
Huge 14,000 Sq. Ft. Dealers Room
DVD's • Magazines • Posters
Model Kits & Model Kit Contest
Laser Discs • Masks • Photos
Books • Toys • Comics
Much More!

Radisson Hotel Los Angeles Int'l Airport • 6225 W Century Blvd. • Los Angeles, CA

SO TERRIFYING WE HAVE TO
INSURE YOUR LIFE

\$1000

DEATH BY
DURING THE SHOWING OF "MACABRE"

MACABRE: William Castle's First Horror Film

by
Christopher
Schaefer

\$1000
in case of
DEATH BY FRIGHT*
DURING THE SHOWING OF "MACABRE"

* Not valid for people with known heart conditions or for suicide

Starring
WILLIAM PRINCE
JIM BACKUS
CAROLINE WHITE
JACQUELINE SCOTT
ARMAN MORGAN

But see, amid the mimic rout,
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes! - it writhes - with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And the serpents sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

- Edgar Allan Poe
The Conqueror Worm (1843)

William Castle didn't direct any film based on the works of Edgar Allan Poe. If he had, I would bet it would have been a classic. The following is an account of the events leading up to the filming of Castle's first horror movie, *Macabre*.

On Monday, November 21, 1955, a French horror movie called *Diabolique* (*Les Diaboliques*) had its American premiere at the Fine Arts Theater in New York City. Its director was Henri-Georges Clouzot, France's master of suspense and an expert at keeping audiences on the edge of their seats in films like *The Raven* (*Le Corbeau*, 1943) and *Wages of Fear* (*Le Salaire de la Peur*, 1953). *Diabolique* had a long run at the Fine Arts, playing until Sunday, April 15, 1956. On April 18 it opened city-wide and in the surrounding area playing to even greater audiences in Manhattan,

Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, Long Island, Westchester and New Jersey.

While *Diabolique* was scaring the pants off of audiences at the Fine Arts, it opened at the Beverly Canon theater in Los Angeles on Friday, March 9, 1956, for what would be a 25 week run. It was during this time that William Castle and his wife, Ellen, went to see the movie. As Castle remembered, it was on a rainy night, and he was surprised to see students standing in line to see a French film with English subtitles. Castle was intrigued, so he asked one of the students why he was there. "My friends told me it really scares the shit out of you," the student told Castle before going into the theater. A year earlier, *Les Diaboliques* was scaring the wits out of filmmakers in Paris. Genet noted that horror fans were lining up by the hour at three of the largest cinemas in Paris (sometimes even in the rain) to see the film.

Castle and the rest of the audience at the Beverly Canon that night were not to be disappointed. Clouzot delivered the goods. In the horrifying suspense-packed finale with the audience screaming, Castle knew that he too had to scare the pants off America, just as Clouzot had done that night and had been doing all across America and France the year before.

So Castle started reading treatments,

scripts, and books. Finally, he decided on *The Marble Forest*, a book by "Theo Durnant." The name was actually pseudonym used by 12 mystery and suspense writers of the San Francisco Bay Area. According to Prine Knickerbocker of the San Francisco Chronicle, the idea of writing a mystery using 12 different authors grew out of a proposal discussed one evening by a group of writers who were having dinner with Darwin L. Teilhet. The writers Terry Adler, Anthony Boucher, Eunice Miya Boyd, Florence Ostrum Faulkner, Allen Hymson, Cary Lucas, Diana Lyon, Lenore Glen Offord, Virginia Ruth, Richard Shumack, Darwin L. Teilhet and William Worley.

The Marble Forest was first published in 1951 by Alfred A. Knopf. At the time, the *New York Times* book critic, Margery H. Osakes wrote that the book was, "...a memorable thriller...a whodunit that is brilliantly conceived and smoothly written."

Castle must have thought so too. Thinking that it would make an excellent horror movie a la *Diabolique*, he set out to acquire the rights to *The Marble Forest*. Acquiring the rights was not easy, Castle told Prine Knickerbocker:

We had to get the 12 writers to sign a contract so that we could use their story. What a job! It took two lawyers seven months to find all of them. Even now,

one is in Australia. They all have a percentage in the picture

Castle next formed a partnership with Robb White, a writer, who had worked with him on *Men of Annapolis*, a syndicated TV series. Castle and White called their company Susina Productions. Robb White then sat down and wrote a screenplay that Castle was happy with.

On Wednesday, July 10, 1957, *The Curse of Frankenstein*, a Hammer horror film had its American premier at the California Theater in San Diego. Starting at midnight with a round-the-clock, 24 hour Horror-A-Thon, the film proceeded to scare audiences at the California. Taking no chances, Warner Bros. (which released *The Curse of Frankenstein* in America), posted "legal" notices absolving themselves of all responsibility. The notices appeared alongside ads for the movie in the downtown dailies, and were handed out at the theater. They read:

See "The Curse of Frankenstein" AT YOUR OWN RISK

To the patrons of The California Theatre

Warner Bros. Pictures will not be liable for NERVOUS BREAKDOWNS, HEART ATTACKS, FAINTING SPELLS, LOSS OF VOICE or any ills attributable to fright or horror. We repeat see "The Curse of Frankenstein" at your own risk!

In short, Warner Bros. was absolving itself of any "legal" responsibilities. It was great ballyhoo. And using much of the same ballyhoo, Warner Bros. opened the film in Los Angeles city-wide in 14 theaters, on Tuesday, July 16. The film proceeded to scare the pants off anyone brave enough to see it.

Two weeks later, on Monday, July 29, Castle started filming *Macabre* on location in Chino, California, Beverly Hills, and at the Ziv studio on Santa Monica Boulevard. Only two weeks later, Castle finished filming.

How much did *Macabre* cost to produce? In his autobiography, Castle wrote that he needed \$90,000 to film *Macabre*. Robb White told the readers of *Fileyfax*, that he had put up \$86,000 of his own money to get the film made. On Sunday, July 13, 1958, A.H. Weiler informed the readers of the *New York Times* that Castle had told him *Macabre* had cost about \$200,000 to make and it had already

grossed approximately \$750,000. Castle also told Weiler that Robb White had given him a check for \$150,000 to produce the film. In *And in the Saturday Evening Post*, the figure was given as \$325,000 (most of it in promotion).¹⁹ Whatever it did cost, *Macabre* became a money maker.

Just as Castle was inspired by *Diabolique* when he set out to film *Macabre*, it appears that he was also inspired by Warner's ballyhoo for their *Frankenstein*. I believe he decided to go them one better, and insure the entire world against "Death by Fright" while watching his movie.

"Scared to Death," happens only in movies and books, not real life. William Castle knew this when he contacted Lloyds of London, to insure audiences against death by fright while watching *Macabre*. At first, Lloyds of London was skeptical, fearing the worst. Since they had nothing written in their actuarial tables on how many people die while watching scary movies - or for that matter, any kind of movie - Lloyds had no idea of how much to charge Castle for such an unusual policy. Eventually, Lloyds determined that five people



THE TRUE STORY OF THE REAL THEO DURRANT

I think I've found a bit of horror trivia about the pseudonym, Theo Durrant, used by the authors of *The Marble Faun* on which *Macabre* is based. William Henry Theodore "Theo" Durrant was a medical student at Cooper Medical College in San Francisco in the late 19th Century. He was also a member of the Emanuel Baptist Church on Bartlett Street, between Twenty-second and Twenty-third Streets, where he was an assistant Sunday School teacher, Sunday usher, secretary of the young people's Christian Endeavor Society, church librarian and handyman making small repairs around the church. From all outward appearances, Theo Durrant was a paragon of virtue, a staunch supporter of his church, and one who always conducted himself with nothing less than the utmost propriety.

But Theo also had a dark side that took him to the brothels on the Barbary Coast that catered to degenerates and pervers. After committing San Francisco's most atrocious crime to date in April 1895 (the *San Francisco Examiner* headlines called it "The Crime of the Century"), Theo would become known as "The Demon in the Bellify."

On Wednesday, April 3, 1895, between four and four-thirty in the afternoon, Durrant lured Blanche Lamont, an 18-year-old high school student, into the church. Lamont was a church member of with plans of becoming a teacher. Tragically, those plans were never to be realized because time was running out for Blanche Lamont. As she entered the church, Lamont had no way of knowing that she had only a few minutes left to live.

In the church library, Durrant made some amorous overtures to Lamont, which she rebuffed. Angered, he grabbed her by the neck with his powerful hands, which were like a steel vise as she choked the life out of her. In seconds, Blanche Lamont was dead. Durrant then carried Lamont's body up to the belfry, and this was depicted in a woodcut illustration in *The National Police Gazette* (Saturday, May 4, 1895).

Ten days later, on Friday, April 12, between 8:00 and 8:30 in the evening, Minnie Williams, an attractive 21-year-old woman, was brutally murdered in the church library. Like Blanche, Minnie was also a church member. Unlike Blanche, Minnie did not resist Durrant's amorous advances, and at first was a willing partner in their sexual tryst.

And yet, a demon within Durrant compelled him to kill Minnie in a most horrible fashion. Tearing away pieces of Minnie's lace-edged linen underclothes, Durrant stuffed them into her mouth with such force they became lodged in the throat asphyxiating her.

Durrant then cut up Minnie with a common silver-plated table knife, slashing her wrists, forehead, throat, and body. At one point, the dinner-table cutlery broke into three pieces. Blood sprayed all over the room. Theo Durrant, or "the Pigeon Man" as he was commonly known as the sleazebag brothels on the Barbary Coast, was in heaven as he continued to sexually ravage Minnie. After he was satiated with his orgy of blood and sex, Theo left the church, and at 9:30 attended a meeting of the Christian Endeavor Society.

It was not all that uncommon for young people to use the church for an occasional trysting place for their social assignations, therefore when people saw Theo and Blanche enter the church together on April 3, they didn't think anything out of the ordinary was happening. Ten days later, on April 12, Theo and Minnie were seen entering the church together. Again, to those who observed the couple entering the church, arm-in-arm, nothing seemed out of the ordinary. They were just another amorous couple, and after all, Theo was a respected member of the congregation. How could they have known a demon was walking in their church?

On Saturday morning, April 13, the body of Minnie Williams was discovered in the library by four disgruntled ladies who were decorating the church for Easter. Miss Marian Lord, Miss Katie Stevens, and Mrs. Nolt entered the church with armfuls of lilies and flowers. They were met by Miss Lila Berry, who was there to assist them. When they were done arranging flowers, Mrs. Nolt, who was not a member, asked to see what books were contained in the church library. Miss Berry opened the library door and discovered the body. At first, it was thought to be the body of Blanche Lamont because the face was obscured

might conceivably die of fright while watching *Macabre*. And so a policy was drawn up, but people with weak hearts or nervous conditions were excluded. The policy for Lloyds cost Castle \$5,000. As it turned out, it was cheap publicity which lured people into theaters, not to be scared to death, but to see someone else die of fright. As insurance policies go, it was a good investment.

After *Macabre* was completed, Castle and White started to shop their little horror film around to the various studios. None were interested. Then, in November, Allied Artists agreed to distribute the film. On Monday, February 24, 1958, a full page ad for *Macabre* appeared in *The Hollywood Reporter* and on Tuesday, February 27, the same ad appeared in *Daily Variety*. The ad copy read:

\$1,000 in case of DEATH BY FRIGHT* During the showing of *Macabre*
 *not valid for people with known heart conditions or for senile

It was around this time that the *Los Angeles Times*' Philip K. Scheuer attended a private screening of *Macabre* with his wife. At the

MACABRE

The Producers of the film MACABRE, undertake to pay the sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS in the event of the death by fright of any member of the audience during the performance.

BENEFICIARY AGREEMENT

In the event of my demise by fright during the performance of the motion picture "MACABRE", I hereby bequest the producers to pay ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000) life benefit to my beneficiary named below.

Beneficiary's full name _____
How received _____

I understand that if I have a known heart or nervous condition the One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) is not payable.

Date _____

This document is invalid if signed by a child or a minor.

time, Mrs. Scheuer had a heart ailment. While the movie failed to frighten her, she still felt the need to slip a nitroglycerin tablet under her tongue following a particularly gruesome scene that showed a close-up of a decaying corpse. Shortly after that, Scheuer informed his readers in the *Times*, "I have seen *Macabre*. There's a risk involved, at that."

On Wednesday, April 16, 1958, a full page ad in *Variety* announced that Allied Artists was launching *Macabre* in a giant six-state saturation of New England. And with that,

Castle's film was well on its way to getting big returns at the box office.

On April 30, 1958, *Macabre* had its West Coast premiere in San Francisco at the RKO Golden Gate Theater on Market Street at Taylor. In its first week in San Francisco, *Macabre* grossed \$24,000 at the box office. (Remember, these grosses were when admission prices were much lower than they are at present.)

On Wednesday, May 7, the ad for *Macabre* in the San Francisco Chronicle

THEO DURRANT

with blood.

The police were called and the church was searched for clues and evidence. The search continued throughout the night and into Easter Sunday morning. Just before morning services, the body of Blanche Lamont was found in the belfry. Detective Edward Gibson and Sergeant Reynolds. Preserved by the cool winds from the Pacific, her naked body, which lay stretched out on the rough wooden floor, looked like a white marble statue. As soon as the body was removed from the belfry, rapid and unavoidable decomposition set in, changing the body's mummified white color to black.

But already, by Saturday evening, a cloud of suspicion had fallen on Theo Durrant. When it was learned that he was across the bay in Walnut Creek on Monday night with his National Guard unit, Police Chief Patrick Crowley sent Detective Andy Anthony to arrest Durrant and bring him back to San Francisco. On Easter Sunday morning, Anthony took a ferry across the bay and caught the first train to Walnut Creek. While on his way, Det. Gibson and Sgt. Reynolds were just making their ghastly discovery in the belfry.

That afternoon, Durrant was arrested not far from Walnut Creek on the road to Mt. Diablo. He had been on maneuvers with the 2nd Brigade Signal Corps of the National Guard. His unit of ten men and one officer had been conducting heliograph experiments on Mt. Diablo. They were met by Det. Anthony and Deputy Sheriff Palmer of Walnut Creek at the ranch of Fred Moses. The two had ridden out to the ranch in a buggy.

It was around 2 p.m. when Durrant and his unit rode up on their horses, stopping in front of the ranch house. Det. Anthony said he was there to arrest Durrant for the murder of Minnie Williams. At first, Lieutenant Perkins, who was in command of the squad, didn't want to give up Durrant. He told the two lawmen that he had taken ten men to Mt. Diablo and he must return with ten men. The other Guardsmen, with the exception of Durrant, agreed with the Lieutenant. But when Durrant expressed a willingness to go with Det. Anthony, Lt. Perkins acquiesced. Anthony then arrested Durrant and returned to San Francisco in the evening with him in custody.

On Monday morning, April 15, a two-column headline in the *Examiner* was calling the double murder "THE CRIME OF A CENTURY!" A three-column headline in the *Chronicle* screamed "Blanche Lamont found dead in Emmanuel's Belfry," and beneath it, a two-column headline proclaimed, "Slain by the Monster who Hacked Minnie Williams' Body."

The double murder, the trial, and eventual execution all proved to be a circulation manager's dream come true. The news coverage sold newspapers in cities across the country as well as in Europe. Not until the sinking of the United Battleship Maine and the Spanish-American War would the dailies have anything as good to write about and cover.

Durrant was first put on trial for Blanche Lamont's murder, and it was one of the longest and most controversial trials in California history, beginning on July 22 and lasting until November 1, 1895. On that Friday afternoon, the jury retired to decide the fate of Durrant (the *San Francisco Examiner* and *Los Angeles Times* both reported that the jury took just five minutes of actual time to reach their verdict), and in twenty minutes they returned to the courtroom. The *Los Angeles Times* read, "We the jury find the defendant, William Henry Theodore Durrant, guilty of murder in the first degree."

The reaction was dramatic. The *Chronicle* observed, "...from the crowded row of the room there came a roar - low, sullen, throaty, guttural [sic] - the sound of the mob type of lawlessness." The *Chronicle* noted while the roar lasted only a moment, "...one could picture what a wild scene of revolt and savagery this courtroom might have been had the jury acquitted the man." In the *Los Angeles Times*, the Associated Press reported, "...men were cheering wildly, while women wept hysterically in excitement."

On December 6, Durrant heard Judge Murphy pronounce the death sentence, ending with the grim judicial words, "...to be hanged by the neck until you are dead. And may God have mercy on your soul." Within ten days, Durrant was taken to San Quentin to await his execution. With a guilty verdict and the hangman's noose all but around Durrant's neck, the State felt it wasn't necessary to try him for Minnie Williams' murder.

On January 7, 1898, after having exhausted all legal appeals, Theo Durrant was hanged at San Quentin. On that morning, between 120 and 200 witnesses had gathered to see the execution. With nerves of steel, Theo Durrant climbed the 13 steps of the scaffold. As hangman Amos Lent slipped the noose around his neck, Durrant asked to say his final words. One can read in supposedly authoritative books that Theo Durrant was not allowed any last words. Not true. His words were mainly devoted declaring his innocence and forgiving the press of San Francisco, which he felt had hounded him. Lent slipped the black hood over Durrant's head and drew the noose up under his chin and ears. Lent gave the signal and the trap door opened suddenly, dropping Durrant to eternity to meet his maker. Eleven long minutes later, he was pronounced dead. The Demon of the Belfry was now part of San Francisco's colorful history.

WHAT THE CRITICS SAID ABOUT MACABRE:

By insuring the lives of his audiences with Lloyds of London, producer William Castle inherently insured his *Macabre* with a surefire exploitable gimmick...This bit of hokey pokey should pay off, even though the picture itself isn't frightening enough to cause more than uncontrollable squirming except in the worst heart cases, and they're excluded anyway. Castle's film however, is just as macabre as its title insinuates.

...Director Castle, in approaching the story with serious intentions, was unwavering in his work. Carl E. Guthrie kept the eerie plot going with his effective camera, and Les Baxter's music further moved the picture through its cloudy paces.

The most delightful part of the whole production are the closing credits, running their merry way and poking fun at the 71 minutes that preceded them. Jack Rabin, Louis Dewitt and Irving Block rate top commendation for this work.

—Ron, *Weekly Variety*, March 12, 1958

Clutching a \$1,000 life insurance policy in my trembling hands yesterday, I sat down at the Fox Oakland prepared to be scared within mere inches of a heart attack as I watched the first local showing of *Macabre*.

...However, most of us expecting to be frightened were in for a considerable disappointment as the movie got under way. True, a few random screams were heard in the audience at one or two shock-value scenes.

...But, all in all, those wily Lloyds of London salesmen had themselves a sure thing when they wrote the *Macabre* policy.
—Theresa Loeb Cone, *Oakland Tribune*, May 1, 1958

...Chances of any heirs and assigns collecting on the \$1,000 policies seem slim, judging by the goings-on in this somber but tepid shocker.

—A H. Weiler, *New York Times*, July 24, 1958

showed a picture of the RKO Theater with lines of people at the box office waiting to buy their tickets and perhaps even see someone die of fright. The marquee read:

CROWDS! CROWDS! CROWDS!

— 39,473 San Franciscans have crowded the RKO Golden Gate to be shocked. Thousands have screamed. Many have fainted but none have collected the \$1000 BECAUSE OF DEATH BY FRIGHT - SO... *MACABRE* STAYS FOR A 2nd HORRIFIC WEEK!

By the end of the second week, *Macabre* had earned another \$10,000.

Macabre opened in Los Angeles on Wednesday, May 21. Opening the same day was another horror film, *The Return of Dracula*, released by United Artists. The producers, Jules V. Levy and Arthur Gardner, were using a variation on Castle's insurance gimmick. Ads appearing in the downtown dailies first appeared on Tuesday, May 20. The ad copy read:

Public Notice!
SEE THIS HORROR FILM AT YOUR OWN RISK*

*Due to the terrifying nature of this picture, 12 leading insurance companies have refused to assume liability for the following conditions: heart attack, trauma, nervous shock, convulsion.

hysteria, insomnia, and any other form of physical or mental disorder induced directly or indirectly from witnessing *The Return of Dracula*. The Management of these theatres therefore cannot be responsible for harm physical or mental to any patron during this engagement.

When Castle first saw the newspaper ads for *Dracula* in the downtown dailies, he contacted his attorney, Herbert Bierswicz, feeling that what United Artists was doing was "unfair competition" since it was capitalizing on his insurance policy stunt. On Tuesday, May 20, Bierswicz sent United Artists a registered letter putting it on notice to "desist and refrain from capitalizing on" Castle's insurance policy stunt. By Friday, May 23, the ad copy had changed:

PUBLIC NOTICE!
ALL NEW! NEVER SHOWN BEFORE see *DRACULA* and the virgin the most horrifying new thrill in the history of Motion Pictures!


United Artists had dropped their insurance bellyhoo. Meanwhile, Castle had some new ad copy of his own. It read:

NOW THERE'S ONLY ONE *MACABRE* - DON'T BE MISLED BY IMITATORS! Only *MACABRE* is the FIRST picture so frightening

\$1000.00

in case of

DEATH by FRIGHT



The greatest showmanship attraction in a decade... backed by a sensational ticket-selling campaign...from ALLIED ARTISTS

MACABRE

that we have to PROTECT YOUR LIFE with a guaranteed INSURANCE POLICY! *MACABRE* has broken records and stunned audiences from coast to coast!

Wherever it was shown, *Macabre* made money. In some cases lots of money: \$24,000 in Boston, \$20,000 in Detroit, \$8,000 in Seattle, \$20,000 in Toronto, \$9,000 in Minneapolis, \$15,000 in Buffalo, \$6,000 in Providence, and \$10,000 in Los Angeles. In 1958, there were 78 films that grossed \$1,000,000 or more, and *Macabre* made the roster. The top film was *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, with \$18 million. Number 78 on the list was *Thunder Road*, with \$1 million. *Macabre* was number 67 on the list. In its initial payoff, *Macabre* grossed \$1.2 million at the box office (that's \$7,088,357 in today's dollars). How was this possible? The easiest answer I can give is Lloyds of London. In fact, Castle told

John Kobler, who was writing an article on him for the *Saturday Evening Post*, that without the insurance policy, *Macabre* would have flopped. However, I'm convinced that some people went to see the film not to be scared to death, but to see someone die of fright while they were watching the movie. Kobler informed the readers of *The Saturday Evening Post* that by 1960 *Macabre* had been shown in some 9,000-odd theaters to approximately 7 million people, and reactions varied from boredom to uncontrollable laughter. No one died of fright.

When *Macabre* was released in 1958, it was one of the few movies I was forbidden to see. Now, after waiting 43 years to see it, I was disappointed. Disappointed because it just wasn't very scary. That's not to say it wouldn't have scared the pants off of me in 1958 when I was fourteen. Two years later, on Halloween, William Castle's *The Tingler* did scare me. But *Macabre* is another story altogether.

The acting by William Prince, Jim Backus, Christine White, and others in the cast is, at best, only fair. The music by Les Baxter is not to be remembered, certainly not a remembered score, like his for *Master of the World*. I'll have to reserve my judgment on Carl E. Guthrie's black-and-white cinematography until I can see a decent video tape, preferably one made from a 35mm master. To judge his cinematography on the basis of having seen a bad 16mm dupe as is currently available would be unfair

to him. The screenplay by Robb White was a bit on the talky side with two flashbacks. William Castle has certainly directed better movies than *Macabre*. Castle was really directing the gimmick of the insurance policy and the audience. His films got better with the next few.

The movie ad art which appeared in the newspapers and on the movie poster (one sheet), promised more than the film delivered. It was lurid. The artist's conception of the horror motif behind *Macabre* showed a grinning skull beside the faces of three terrified women next to a graveyard. Even by today's standards, it looks great, promising all kinds of terror. Next to the insurance policy, it was the best thing about the movie.

According to a story in *Daily Variety* (May 10, 2000), producer Joel Silver and director Robert Zemeckis are planning a remake of *Macabre*, with a \$15 to \$20 million budget. That's a far cry from Castle's original budget. No mention was made of using an insurance policy gimmick.

When it arrives in my local theater, I'll be one of the first ones in line to see the movie and maybe see someone die of fright.

[Editor's note: As we go to press, the latest information regarding the Zemeckis and Silver's *Dark Castle* Entertainment (which has already re-made two other William Castle films, *House on Haunted Hill* and *13 Ghosts*) is expected to release this in October of either 2003 or 2004. Gary Oldman, Steve Buscemi, and Rachel Leigh Cook are cast possibilities.]



WHAT THE CRITICS SAID ABOUT *MACABRE*:

Macabre, which opened yesterday at the RKO-Golden Gate, is more a bag of tricks, some grisly, some witty, and some drolly funeral, than it is a sustained tale of terror. It builds its suspense, and then it deliberately interrupts it, but the final result is several notches above the ordinary horror film.

Based upon a novel, "The Marble Forest," written by 12 whodunit writers of the Bay Area, *Macabre* contains both mystery and shock.

—Paine Knickerbocker, *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 1, 1958

Audiences that like their horror in large scale lots should be pleased with this William Castle-Robb White Production that Allied Artists is releasing. With horror movies presently raking in high profits, *Macabre* should do very well at the box office. Script here is a tongue-in-cheek at the beginning and ending. Photography by Carl Guthrie bears out the script substance excellently.

—Film Daily, March 13, 1958

Well, you can throw away those Lloyds of London policies — they don't cover death from boredom — and any tranquilizers you may be planning to bring.

—Charles Strawn, *Los Angeles Times*, May 22, 1958

..The best horror stories were written to be read aloud and the best horror plays should be enjoyed with others in a theatre. Here is a field where the movies have a distinct advantage over TV, and William Castle's *Macabre* should enable the exhibitor to take advantage of it.

—Jack Moffitt, *Hollywood Reporter*, March 10, 1958

"I have seen the trials which God has given to the sons of Man. He has made everything beautiful in His time. Also, He has set the word in their hearts so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."

-Ecclesiastes 3:10-11, in the eulogy delivered by Anton Larsson (Bela Lugosi) at the funeral service of the first victim in "Mystery of the Mary Celeste"

The Mystery of MYSTERY OF THE MARY CELESTE

PART TWO By Frank J. Delo Stritto and Andi Brooks

Editor's Note: As our regular readers know, *Cult Movies Press* recently published first book, *VAMPIRE OVER LONDON - BELA LUGOSI IN BRITAIN*, deals with Lugosi's last, forgotten stage tour as Dracula. The book deals mainly with those overlooked eight months of 1931, when Lugosi toured throughout the British provinces, and then filmed *Mother Riley Meets The Vampire* before returning to America. Authors Frank Delo Stritto and Andi Brooks include in their book the behind-the-scenes stories of Lugosi's two earlier British films, *Mystery of the Mary Celeste* (1933) and *Dark Eyes of London* (1939). These are "flashback chapters" cleverly woven into the story of 1931. Though the stage tour is the main focus of *VAMPIRE OVER LONDON*, Delo Stritto and Brooks did extensive research on those two films, and located and interviewed several members of the production teams. Following is an extract from the book, dealing with *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*.

Part 1 of this extract (*Cult Movies* #36) recounts Hammer Pictures' preparations for filming *Mystery of the Mary Celeste* (not "Marie Celeste" as it is often called) and writer-director Denison Clift's development of the script. The extract ends with Bela Lugosi's reception in New York, where he briefly stopped en route to England. The story continues with the Lugosits' arrival in Southampton.

Bela and Lillian arrived on the steamship *Berengaria* in Southampton on Thursday, July 10. All celebrity arrivals that day were overshadowed by the British amateur boxing team, returning victorious from New York. Bela let Jean Parker, Eugene Pallette (arriving to appear in Rene Clair's *The Ghost Goes West*) and Shirley Grey (the leading lady in *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*) step forward while he struggled to decipher the southern English accent of the reporter. Most attention went to 18 year-old Jean Parker. When the inevitable questions about Count Dracula came, he quipped, "It does not make me a vampire off the films. I am really a very jolly person, and my wife is not a bit afraid of me." He apologized for his difficulties in English, and reminisced that when he first arrived in America 15 years before, all that he could manage in English were "yes" and "no." He, Lillian and Shirley Grey were met at

Waterloo Station by some of Hammer's directors. For one of them, J. Elder Wills, meeting Grey was love at first sight, and he would pursue her for the remainder of the filming.

Hammer publicity never quite recovered from Bela's short delay in embarking. A reception at the Grosvenor Hotel, not far from Hammer's offices on Regent Street, initially planned for the 10th was delayed until the 14th and then moved forward to the 11th. The multitude of re-scheduling received more press coverage than the reception itself, where Bela was at his genial best. As he strode across the lobby to the banquet room, a uniformed page-boy timidly asked for an autograph, and offered a small album. "Sure! Yes. Come over here." Bela patted his fan on the head. "I hope I see a lot more of you, son, during my stay here." He noticed a watching journalist:

"How I love these kids! They are my real audience, and how loyal they are to their favorites! That's the type of little fellow who

really likes me. They're not frightened by my pictures-not really. They love every bit of them. And when they recognise me in America the children cluster around me in the street and shout, 'Make funny faces, Lugosi! Make funny faces!'"

The episode might have been a set-up for the press-Hammer's office boy, Eric Wells, often dressed the part, complete with green uniform, gold buttons, white gloves and pill-box hat.

At the reception, Lillian stayed well in the background as Bela fielded questions, though for a moment he pulled her to his side and extolled her virtues:

"I think she is the grandest wife in the world. I wish all men had a wife like mine. She was my book-keeper and secretary for two years before we eloped to get married. She had youth and beauty and was so loyal and good that I couldn't help marrying her!"

He struggled with a variety of British

CULT MOVIES

accents, but had heard all of the questions many times before. He covered for his troubles following the conversations by acting very much the Continental gentleman-clicking his heels, kissing ladies hands, courtly bows. He managed such gestures with great panache, and won over the press and his hosts. They sensed he only understood a fraction of what they said to him, and were surprised at his command of English when he spoke.

Bela took pains to distance himself from his Dracula image, an effort aided by the studio biography that Universal was then distributing in England as build-up to release of *The Raven*. Such pulp often described him as something out far removed from the mad fiends he portrayed. The latest version-written in the first person though almost certainly a publicist's invention-served first to sell a movie, but it also mirrored the actor's lament, which Bela repeated with variations throughout his stay in England.

"I am made in the same mould as everyone else. I don't grow any horns for ears, nor do I sprout bat's wings on my back. Fan letters come to me from all over the world from people who have heard strange tales about my childhood in the Hungarian town of Lugos. The writers ask if my parents were hypnotists; if I commune with ghosts, and whether or not I practice the supernatural in my private life. They say my eyes have an expression unlike the eyes of any human being."

As Bela held court at the Grosvenor, a few blocks away and probably unknown to him, *The Mysterious Mr Wong* began its British release. *Film Weekly* enjoyed a "quite effective thriller" about "a mad mandarin with a nice taste for torture...Lugosi himself is devilish enough to chill many a juvenile spine." *Pictograph's* review is more consistent with posterity's view of the movie: "No regard is paid to plausibility or logical development...[Bela Lugosi] is rather heavy, but definitely amusing."

On Wednesday July 16, Bela fulfilled the second half of his small deal with Universal and appeared at the trade show premiere of *The Raven* at London's Prince Edward Theatre. Viewers — almost entirely theatre owners, booking agents and trade journalists — broke into tumultuous applause as he stepped from behind the curtain. Humbled by the unexpected reception, Bela only managed a heartfelt thank you and a wish that *The Raven* "would be enjoyed and make money." He was hardly on stage long enough for many to realize he had not shaven for at least three days. In the lobby he briefly greeted the audience as they left the theatre, and impressed all as decidedly non-masochist. He explained his whiskers as necessary for his upcoming film, and postulated a bit on how actors must prepare for parts. A few young boys sneaked in and asked for his autograph. One fan gushed on his sinister and evil appearance. Not quite following all the sputtering praise, he replied only "That is indeed a compliment." Asked about the popularity of horror, Bela again described the fan mail he received from women, and delivered a

variant of one of his oft-repeated responses:

"Women are interested in terror for the sake of terror. For generations they have been the subject sex. This seems to have bred a masochistic instinct-an enjoyment of, or at least a keen interest in suffering, experienced vicariously through the screen...I suppose it's because a woman, being psychologically high-strung, likes shocks to the nervous system, as a counter-irritant to her nervous tension."

Even in the male-centered world of late Hapsburg Hungary in which he was raised, Bela had extreme views on the role and psychology of women. But his little discourse on women and horror was actually the invention of a writer, Gladys Hall, who interviewed Lugosi from the late 1920s to the early 1940s, and whose published pieces owe much to her own imagination and speculation. Bela was probably unaware of the recent pronouncements against movie horror by the British Board of Film Censors. "The Stroller" — the anonymous columnist of *The Kinematograph Weekly* — cast his remark as a rebuttal to the BBFC president, Edward Shortt.

The trade papers cared more for Bela than for his latest film. *The Daily Film Review* thought *The Raven* an "excellently conceived thriller" that "timed the thrills so effectively...Bela Lugosi sustains the central role in a completely satisfying manner, ranking as one of the best masochist studies he has yet given." *To-Day's Cinema* found him "indulging in mysterious prognostication and maniacal laughter in about equal proportions," and poses that "whether [*The Raven*] can be considered to succeed depends rather upon the type of patron that views it." Most damning was *The Kinematograph Weekly*, for which *The Raven* was "just another manufactured hair-raiser with the established stooges of crime entertainment, Lugosi and Karloff, putting over their same old act, the former dishing it out and the latter taking it...Good as these experienced players are they find it difficult towards the finish to prevent the extravagant situations from being greeted with laughter." Seventy years on, *The Raven* still polarizes opinions even among vintage horror aficionados.

Two days later — by then the Lugosius were in Falmouth for location shooting on *Mystery of the Mary Celeste* — yet another Lugosi movie premiered in London, *Chanda on the Magic Island*, a 56-minute feature edited from his latest serial. Not surprisingly, critics found it "not a happy example of clear continuity" and only for "the very credulous and unsophisticated." Though targeted solely for juvenile audiences, the movie's combination of the occult and mayhem (a lost tribe kidnaps a princess for human sacrifice on Lemuria, "the magic island" of the title; Lugosi for once playing the hero, saves her) earned it an "A" from the BBFC ("Adult" — persons under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. This was the BBFC's harshest rating short of an all-out ban). Probably more Britons in 1935 than today recognized the Lemurians, like the Aryans, as one of the seven root races in the mythology adopted by the Nazis.

Chanda on the Magic Island may not have quite deserved its A, but A-rated *The Raven* barely missed a B. *Kinematograph Weekly's* condemnation of *The Raven* lamented "the attraction the eerie thriller continues to exercise on the general public." Any outcry against *The Raven* had no immediate effect, as only weeks later came MGM's *Mad Love*, retitled *Hands of Orlok* in Britain. It boasts the same basic plot as *The Raven* (a surgeon with sado-masochistic hobbies, obsessed with a younger woman, plots terrible revenge when denied her), and a star, Peter Lorre, capable of characterization at least as unsettling as Lugosi's. *Hands of Orlok* of course earned an "A" and specked its share of debate.

At the June meeting of the CEA (Cinematograph Exhibitors Association—the theatre owners guild) in Cardiff, Edward Shortt claimed that he "did not believe that any single film could have a lasting effect on the public, but the result of the same theme repeated over and over again might be most undesirable." Shortt's views had come around to those of some of his harshest critics. One of them was the National Council of Women, which had long warned that

"The cumulative effect of viewing, week after week, themes of ungoverned human passions could not but undermine and confuse the ideas of right and wrong, of the normal and the abnormal, and lead to a craving for thrills in real life compatible with those on the screen."

Much to the BBFC's dismay, local county councils (LCCs) throughout Britain were already applying their own standards as they increasingly rated films independently. The LCCs were the ultimate authorities of what films played in their jurisdictions. The alliances and coalitions on which the BBFC depended had started to unravel. Shortt resisted many calls to introduce a new "HP" rating ("Horrific" — persons under 16 not admitted) and hoped that the film producers and theatre owners would make his job easier by policing themselves and "discourage this type of subject as far as possible." With Universal already announcing plans for at least four more horror films, and with all the films in release doing respectable business, neither Hollywood nor British theatre owners and filmmakers showed any sign of abandoning horror.

In late July, *Film Weekly* published an interview with Bela, probably given at "The Raven" trade show. Despite the title, "I Love Horror Parts" Says Bela Lugosi, he spoke in very somber terms of the demands of playing in horror films. He did provide such quotable lines as:

"In playing Dracula, I have to work myself up into believing that he is real, to ascribe to myself the motives and emotions that such a character would feel. For a time, I become Dracula—not merely an actor playing at being a vampire."

As with many of Lugosi's public statements, his interviewer may well have embel-

lished what he actually said. Yet some of the statements in as "I Love Horror Parts" are quite similar to what he told recent interviewers, and *Film Weekly* was hardly predisposed to cast Lugosi as loving horror. If predisposed at all, the London-based magazine delighted in showing that the men who made horror films actually disdained them. Later that year, *Film Weekly* separately interviewed Peter Lorre and Colin Clive, co-stars of *Mad Love*. Each lambasted horror films. In his interview "Real & Unreal Horror," Lorre dismissed all horror films as rubbish:

"The average horror film from Hollywood is either absolutely obvious and silly, or else it appeals to the sadistic emotions of the audience by showing scenes of torture, whipping, etc."

Clive, famous for his two performances as the high strung Dr. Frankenstein, bemoaned his fate in "I Hate Horror Films":

"You may tell me that millions enjoy horror films and that out of those millions, thousands appreciate my work in them, and I will tell you that I still hate playing in them. But I do not know how to escape from what you might call the casting curse of Frankenstein... My only hope is that I may outlive this demand for horror pictures."

He did, but just barely—two years later he succumbed to pneumonia.

Also in 1935, *Film Weekly* ran another interview,

"I Hate The Word Horror"
Says Boris Karloff.

Sensing the mood of the times, Karloff cleverly walked the fine line between denouncing horror and defending his own films, which he insisted were

"thrillers" not "horrors."

"For the horror film there is no future; there is no present; there has been no past... I think *The Raven* was a mistake. Here was an attempt to pile on the thrills without much logic."

Lugosi largely shared the sentiments of his fellow actors; but he alone either served up or had attributed to him pro-horror one-liners:

"...I have deliberately specialised in such characters, and I firmly believe there will be suitable rôles for me for a long time to come... Since I make money playing in pictures like *Dracula* Hollywood says why not let him continue to be a fiend, and I heartily agree with Hollywood."

* * *

For the title role of *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*, Hammer contracted the Mary B. Mitchell, anchored off southern Cornwall in Falmouth Bay, some 300 miles from London. In naval history, the 130 ft. 227 ton Mary B has a footnote as the most famous "Q" ship—an armed decoy of World War I. Hammer also contracted the Archibald Russell for filming the Mary B at a distance from offshore, and for the brief appearance of the Dei Gratia. Like the *Mary Celeste*, the Mary B had three masts; and the dense haze off Cornwall during most of the shooting effectively obscures the schooner's steel hull, allowing it to pass for a 19th century wooden brigantine. Falmouth, with its "brooding spirit of

the past, its silver waters and ochre sails," also served in exterior shots for the New York harbor of 1872.

from which the *Mary Celeste* sails.

For filming on the Mary B, the company were onboard by 8:00 in the morning, well after sunrise in Falmouth late July sunrise. Weather permitting, the Mary B stayed at sea most of the day. Shirley Grey, as the only woman in the cast and almost the only woman in the entire company, did not lack for attention. None of it came from her would-be beloved. Tight space onboard left no room for the film's art director, and Elder Wills, smitten with Shirley since her arrival, hardly saw her while in Falmouth. To avoid noise from harbor traffic, and to be able to take advantage of daylight from any angle without catching the coastline, Cliff directed that his two ship stunts go well offshore. Almost all of Shirley's scenes were with Arthur Margetson, playing Captain Briggs, her husband in the film. Soon, a real-life love triangle, mirroring the one in the script, developed.

Through the week of July 13, the filming troupe assembled in Falmouth, staying at the Falmouth and Riviera Hotels. On July 17, Bela and Lillian arrived. Falmouth's newspaper still practiced the quaint custom of publishing lists of all hotel guests to make the visitors feel welcome. In Cornwall, Bela was not the celebrity he was in London, and Denison Clift attracted more attention from the locals. Most of the company brought their spouses with them, who

kept each other company while the cast and crew spent a good part of the day at sea. The weather and the seas were not too uncooperative, and shooting on the

Mary B, initially scheduled to complete on Sunday, July 20, finished on the 25th

instead.





Bela alone, left, and with director Denison Clift, right, *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*

History does not record how Bela's delicate stomach fared in the rolling seas off Cornwall.

Always attentive of how he was photographed, Bela watched cameraman Eric Cross prepare for work, and appreciated that he was no longer in Hollywood. Despite his youth Cross already had a decade of experience, first as a stills photographer at Twickenham Studios, then as a freelance cinematographer working out of Wembley. Cross noted his heavy equipment around the deck between set-ups, and called on the filming crew only for help in loading film. During actual shooting, as Cross manned the camera, a part-time assistant watched that the lens setting stay put. British cameramen, like their Hollywood counterparts, had light meters, but as a matter of pride and habit rarely used them. They adjusted their lenses by dead-reckoning. Those lenses were red-sensitive, and blue eyes like Bela's could turn transparent on film if the settings were not quite right. Cross knew all the craftsman's tricks for compensating for such troublesome equipment. He carried a collection of handkerchief-size gauze cloths of varying fineness and colors. Depending on the natural lighting-a tricky calculation with the cloud cover and reflection from the water-he would pick one, burn a hole in its center with his cigarette and use it as a rim-filler over his lens. Sometimes a patch of chaffon or silk stocking might do the trick. The sound recording equipment was similarly primitive by Hollywood standards, and compensated by ingenious folk remedies. Acoustic shadows plagued the shooting, as the sound quality on the final print testifies.

Cross watched Lugosi as well.

Cinematographers tend to be unimpressed with movie stars, and Cross was no different. More six decades later, Cross' sole memory of Bela was "apart from thinking he was Errol Flynn, he was a great guy." He did not elaborate; but Bela from land-locked Hungary was never much of a swashbuckler at sea.

Unsure of how the at-sea footage would turn out, Clift hurried his rushes into Falmouth's Grand Theatre, for late night viewing by himself and anyone in the company. In the wee hours of the morning they left the theatre, generally enthusing on the shooting. No incident of note occurred in Falmouth, but Hammer, not to be outdone by MGM, manufactured its own. Filming of *Mutiny on the Bounty* at Catalina Island off California, already plagued by delays, turned tragic in late July. A floating set collapsed in the swell, drowning a cameraman who tried to save his equipment. Immediately a similar story surfaced from Falmouth. During the second take of an action shot, when a panic-stricken seaman falls to his death in the sea, the stand-in slipped from the rigging of the Mary B, landing flat on his back in the bay. A rescue launch soon retrieved the stunned stuntman, who was little the worse for wear. Clift enthused to reporters that he caught the episode on camera and would edit it into his film. Hardly surprising since the "accidental" fall and the pick-up by the launch had been planned in advance.

From Falmouth, the company moved on to Nettlefold Studios at Wilton-on-Thames, a few miles southwest of London, for interior shooting. Geoff Faithfull, Nettlefold's resident cinematographer, replaced Eric Cross, and juggled shooting *Mystery of the Mary Celeste* with

another production, *Legal Murder*. At Nettlefold, Clift had a magnificent toy to play with. On a field about 100 metres from the studios, the film crew constructed a replica of the Mary Celeste's deck. Proclaimed, perhaps truthfully, as "the biggest set ever built" at Walton, the onshore ship deck stretched Hammer's budget. The deck section was full scale; tens of men beneath it could rock it back and forth to simulate rolling in the waves. Large water tanks set atop towers, and stagehands on elevated platforms around the set wielded air and water hoses and tank releases to generate storm conditions within the camera's field of vision. Those cameras had trouble not capturing the platforms as well as the surrounding landscapes, so all the scenes on deck were photographed at night. In late July, full darkness reaches Walton well after 9:00 pm. With setting the lighting and many other details, filming could not begin until after midnight. All the footage on the deck set had to be shot in a single night-the budget could not afford a second night of series of stage hands on overtime for retakes.

Hammer milked every bit of publicity value from the night shooting. With journalists and the curious as onlookers, the full company crowded onto the field behind the studio. Denison Clift, loudspeaker in hand, literally rose to the occasion on his command post on one of the platforms. While most actors and crew waited through the evening for their call, Clift darted about tending to everything. With no hope that the crowd could hear or heed any cry "Action!", Clift blew a police whistle to signify filming. About 1:30 in the morning the cameras rolled. In less than 4 hours, the skies

would begin to brighten.

The most important reason of the night was "the hurricane scene." Most of the cast would be onboard while water was unleashed from the tanks in three waves. Clift decided to test the equipment first on much simpler scene — Lorenzen alone on deck, revelling in his final revenge. A mast arm swung into his head; he stumbles about confused and dazed before being swept overboard by torrents of water. The other actors stood watching their turn, watching Bela fight the waves. His short scene over, Bela, soaked to the skin, ran across the field to his dressing room.

A key man in the hurricane scene was George Mozart, the oldest and smallest man in the cast and also the film's comic relief (and also a company director of Hammer). Quite unlikely that a ship's cook would be called "to take the wheel" in a storm, but Mozart baffled with water as he clings for dear life to the enormous steering wheel made a great image. Clift made a half-hearted last minute inquiry on Mozart's frailty and years. Slightly rebuffed, he sent an assistant cameraman aloft to film the action from a height and took his place next to Faithfull.

Just as he reached for his whistle, Clift noticed Bela on deck in street clothes. Bela's usual custom, when not on call, was to return to his hotel or stay quietly in the background. Now, he stood on the set, a bottle of Black & White Whiskey in each hand. Clearly some B&W was already inside him, but these bottles were for Mozart and Johnny Schofield, who like Mozart had to man the wheel and catch the brunt of the storm. "Stick it, boys, be brave and when you come out one each for you," cried Bela. "It's good, I know, I've had some." Clift shot back, "Off the ship, Bela. You're dead. You'll be in the shot in less than a minute." Bela hurriedly scrambled over the side. "We're going to shoot. Stand by, everybody. Now don't lose your heads. Now everybody ready—the whistle will blow first, then a short pause. Look out. Action!" Water came from everywhere, the ship rolled, the wind howled. Mozart's bowler hat flew off. Their lines, just barely caught on the sound track, might be their dialogue or their gut reaction to the deluge: Schofield. Holy Saints, save us!

Mozart: No good, mate — they can't hear you in this weather.

Mozart knocked his head against the wheel; water swept Schofield off the scene altogether. Clift called "Cut," and immediately re-staged the set for one last shooting before dawn.

Bela roared to Mozart, plied him with whiskey, wrapped a blanket around him and plied him with more B&W. He all but carried Mozart to his own dressing room in the studio, forced more whiskey down him, stripped off his wet clothes and insisted he take another drink. Mozart's dresser arrived with fresh clothes, but Bela insisted he first lie down. He put the small actor on a sofa, covered and tucked him in, punctuating each

action with yet another shot of whiskey, and then personally went to fetch Mozart a ride to his hotel. He returned with Arthur Margetson, whose scene as Captain Briggs had just ended. Margetson too was soaked through from the filming, and he too had consumed his ration of B&W. Mozart was now thoroughly drunk, and just as well. The short ride to the hotel at Shepperton, with the tipsy Margetson at the wheel, was a bit harrowing.

Interior shooting offered no surprises other than the growing ardor in the scenes between Margetson and Shirley Grey. Everyone in the company sensed something between them except Elder Wills. Bela contented himself with flirting with the script girl, Tilly Day, whom he dubbed "the English Rose." Tilly read his lines aloud to him, and Bela copied her pronunciations and pacing. She was impressed with his mimicking skills, which his days of learning lines phonetically had honed well. After a Sunday morning of shooting on August 4, most of the cast and crew retreated to the Thames for a picnic. Wills arrived in a small boat, nattily attired, with a wicker basket of food and a bottle of champagne, but no Shirley. He waited nervously for an eternity, until Shirley and Arthur floated by in their own boat. The food followed them down the river as Wills flung it into the water, threw a tantrum and stormed off. By some accounts he kept the champagne. When Eric Cross heard of the incident, he did not believe it. "I can't imagine him screaming at any one, very unlike him. I once stole his girl friend at Wembley and no screaming ensued." Wills, short and corpulent, cut a far less striking figure than the much-married Margetson.

The Lugosi also passed on the picnic, and spent their free time strolling around Walton. In Falmouth Bela had spent most daylight hours at sea, but found a bit of

anonymity in the town. Not in a filming center where everyone recognized him. He did his best to ignore his well-wishers, but always found them courteous and respectful—something he thought ingrained in their national character, something he felt he had not really seen since Hungary. The slower pace of life and what he thought a higher degree of professionalism were turning him into an Anglophile. What impressed him most of all was that even at as small company as Hammer, a journeyman director like Denison Clift could turn out something of a personal vision. Bela had personal visions as well, and wanted an outlet for them.

"Hollywood doesn't let actors and writers exploit and deliver their talents and imaginations. It has to go through the mill, not be passed by one individual talent, right or wrong. There is something in England we do not have in the matter of courtesy. Whether they like you or not, they feel if they would not be kind and courteous, they would offend themselves. I observed a lot in England in the way of courtesy I would like to spread here. They don't curtail actors so much. They work more at leisure. They are rested people working. That is why they sometimes get the results they do."

In the decades between the world wars, England sought to regain its Victorian prosperity by extolling Victorian values. Bela felt an affinity for this charming land which mirrored his own desire to recapture an idealized past. Britain's great ally to the west and its great enemy to the east embraced the new age and displaced it as the premiere nations of the modern world. In the 1890s, Count Dracula chose England not for its quaintness but for its modernity, a notion lost on both the land and its visitor in the 1930s.

* * *

To distribute *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*.

Lugosi and Shirley Grey



Below: Bela, wife, and director Clift



Above: A scene from *Mary Celeste*

Hammer by-passed Exclusive Films, the company partly owned by Hammer chairman Will Hinds, and signed instead with a new company General Film Distributors. Run by one of the most blatantly scrupulous men in British films, Arthur Rank, and one of the dodgiest, C. M. Wolff, GFD was anxious to make its mark, and tapped "Mystery of the Mary Celeste" as a prime offering of its first crop of movies. Denison Clift's new film received a better build-up than typical small studio productions. Its trade show premiere was timed to coincide with the November release in Britain of "Mutiny on the Bounty," when demand for maritime films would supposedly peak. Notices in the trade journals were mixed. *To-Day's Cinema* bemoaned "narrative drawbacks," but appreciated the "realistic settings, faithful maritime atmosphere and resourceful blend of thrill, mystery and sensation with effective comic relief." "Neither the staging nor the story is too convincing," thought *The Kinematograph Weekly*, "but there nevertheless rests on the grim eeriness of the play and its chilly message of foreboding, heartily delivered by the strong cast, a succession of thrills." Echoing the growing hostility towards

"horror" films, *The Daily Film Renter* found *Mystery of the Mary Celeste* "pretty grim fare, akin to a Grand Guignol performance, with sudden deaths and disaster galore. In fact, slaughter becomes so commonplace it ceases to have more than a passing significance." It did quite enjoy Lugosi's performance, which "becomes almost awe-inspiring in the climax." The American trade paper *Variety* reviewed few London trade shows, but thought the star's performance "outstanding," and the story "morbid and unsatisfactory." Most reviewers commented on the grimness and tragedy of *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*, hardly designed for what the 1930s considered mass appeal. George Mozart's memoirs describe how impressed his fellow company directors were Clift's finished film, which they saw as their first real success, and their disappointment with the returns. With the general difficulties of booking independent films, and the 1936 downturn in the film industry that hit British studios and cinemas particularly hard, the film did scant business.

Trade journal reviews are typically more generous than criticisms in the more

prestigious newspapers and magazines, but for *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*, they are the only records of the film in its original form, with running length of about 80 minutes. What played in most cinemas that booked the movie and what copies of it that survive today is a 62 minute version, retitled *The Phantom Ship* for the American market. Gone entirely is that portion of the story set in Gibraltar. Characters in the Gibraltar scenes are listed as cast credits roll across the screen, but none appear in the film. Gone too are most scenes on the discovery of the abandoned ship, with Eric Cross' camera sweeping across the empty decks and through the deserted cabins. These eerie shots and the inquest in Gibraltar were meant to establish the mystery of a ghost ship, with its crew vanished but its lifeboats in place. A single dialogue card replaces them:

"This story was inspired by the findings of the Attorney General at Gibraltar, and portrays the grim sea tragedy of the American brig *Mary Celeste* found drifting and derelict in Mid-Atlantic on December 5th 1872 --- one of the strangest and most dramatic chapters in

Below: A rare photo of the film's technical crew



Above: A scene from *Mary Celeste*

maritime history."

Editing made a grim film even grimmer—also gone is the surprise ending with Briggs and Sarah living in carefree seclusion on a tropical island. Their new fate is described in a voice-over into Lugosi's monologue near the end of the film, when he at last reveals himself as the murderer to the hated first mate. The dubbing is an excellent imitation of Bela's voice, and might not be detectable but for a brief mismatch with the lip movements:

"Briggs tried to get away on a raft with his pretty bride, but I got him. I got her, too."

Stripped of the scenes of the deserted ship and the sequences in Gibraltar, the 60 minutes screen time that remain become a pedantic hour indeed. The best scenes by far are the opening in the harbor saloon, which evokes a seedy waterfront atmosphere, though certainly not one in New York. Except for the lone American in the cast (Ben Welden, later a popular character actor in gangster roles), accents more suggest *My Fair Lady* than *Gyps & Dolls*. The crew certainly look and act like hardened seamen, none more so than Gunner Moir, as the shanghaied Katz. A former heavyweight boxing champion of the Royal Navy, Moir had massive arms and chest, and by the time he turned to acting, a massive belly. His bulk serves mainly as a canvas for a gallery of tattoos. His chest sports an almost life-size portrait of Queen Victoria—a decidedly post-1872 (the setting of the movie) Victoria, but it steals its few scenes. Arthur Margetson's refined, aristocratic Captain Briggs (*Variety* found his accent "bordering on the Oxonian") hardly seems the proper master for such a hoard. Perhaps Clift's original ending, with Briggs stealing away with his bride in the night, leaving his shipmates to their fates, is more believable than something more heroic for the Captain.

At sea, action is largely replaced by talk. The brutality that *Mutiny on the Bounty* delights in depicting happens off-screen in *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*. Little excitement or interest is generated as the killer works his way through the crew until only Lorenzen (Lugosi) or 1st mate Bilson remain. Lorenzen drops his façade, shoots Bilson and throws him still alive to the sharks, and laughs maniacally. At last Lugosi slips into his familiar screen persona and indeed "becomes almost awe-inspiring." Those moments are few, as the fateful mast arm swings into his head, and he soon falls or jumps overboard.

Bela needed a director to control or at least guide his tendency to overact. Lorenzen's remorse after killing a shipmate (not a murder, but in rescuing Sarah Briggs from an attacker) is simply bad acting. In the finale, Bela hams uncon-

fortably as the dazed Lorenzen gropes around the empty ship. The actor so adept at portraying larger-than-life characters was never at ease with the mundane.

With Lugosi as the fiend, *Mystery of the Mary Celeste* takes an hour to reveal what the audience suspects from the start. Even when not in his usual persona, Bela ooscreen seemed responsible for any mayhem. In murder mysteries, he could be effectively cast as a suspect but not the one-whodone-it. "Red herring" roles—the apparently guilty character who is actually innocent—were a staple of his work. Clift's failure to heighten any mystery or suspense thus doubly undermines the film. The heavy editing of existing versions may be the culprit, but Clift never exploits the numerous ironic touches in his own script: Lorenzen's religious fervor might be genuine or only a cover for his plot; his murders only begin after he kills Sarah's would-be rapist; Bilson meets the same fate that he meted to Lorenzen six years before.

Perhaps Clift had no choice with the usable footage at hand. Despite the cost and hype, scenes on the full deck set comprise only a few seconds of screen time. If Bela suffered "water drenching him like a rat," as Mozart recalls, none of it survives in the final cut. In Bela's big scene, wind eerily swirls through Lorenzen's long white hair, but not a drop of water hits him. Likewise, filming at sea did not justify its expense—the focus is soft and the sound is indistinct. Clift did indeed use his footage of the stunner's "accidental" spill into Falmouth Bay, but only at the expense of continuity of action and character.

* * *

Bela's work in Walton-on-Thames ended in early August. On August 14th, Hammer gave the Lugosi a regal send off at Waterloo Station in London. Bela thanked everyone profusely, and all but vowed to return. All press reports of the filming had been glowing, but Bela harbored at least a few reservations about the end product. He had seen some rushes and knew that the film had a tacky look, similar to the shoestring budget films he had made on Hollywood's poverty row. Hollywood's richly textured black & white films that impress audiences even today were until after World War II a near monopoly of the major studios. In his fond reminiscence of making *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*, Bela allowed one doubt to surface, "I think that England, if they would have the sense to buy the technicians of Hollywood, they would be very, very keen competition." He probably did not know that until only a few years earlier British film-makers routinely carried the extra expense of importing French

or American cameramen, rather than use the supposedly inferior home-grown technicians.

The next day Bela and Lillian sailed for New York on the S. S. Majestic. In the 1970s, all that Lillian recalled of the return trip was that Bela's workload forced them to cancel a planned vacation to Hungary:

"Universal said we had to get back immediately for *The Invisible Ray*, and they really made a stink about it. Bela was heartbroken that we wouldn't have the time to take the trip to Hungary. Then, when we finally did get back in late August; they told us that production wouldn't begin for at least another month! That really set Bela off, but by then it was already too late."

Though interviewed and profiled constantly in England, he never mentioned a vacation, aborted or otherwise. What constantly made the press was the demand for Bela's services. Film offers were plentiful in America, and now in England, too. He at last might get the bankroll and the clout to escape Dracula's shadow. If Hollywood saw him only as a monster, England might not. And if not England, then he could star in his own films. He had appeared in many low budget independent films, seen filmmaking on a shoestring first-hand on both sides of the Atlantic, and thought he might now produce his own movies. He sailed for New York as filled with hope as on his first voyage to America 15 years before, as a penniless refugee. He hardly sensed that the impending ban of horror films in Britain would impoverish him again, and that of the many films on offer to him, he would make only one.

* * *

VAMPIRE OVER LONDON - BELA LUGOSI IN BRITAIN tells the full story of Lugosi's last "Dracula," the story of both the inner workings of the tour and its reception by the British public. The book also recounts the behind-the-scenes stories of Lugosi's three British films, *Mystery of the Mary Celeste*, *Dark Eyes of London*, and *Mother Riley Meets The Vampire*.

Only 1,000 copies of VAMPIRE OVER LONDON - BELA LUGOSI IN BRITAIN exist. To purchase a copy, send a check or money order for \$29.95 plus \$3 shipping & handling (Texas residents please add \$2.48 sales tax), with shipping address, to: CULT MOVIES PRESS, 644 East 712 Street, Houston, Texas 77007, USA.

(For worldwide shipping rates please direct inquiries to the above address, or to: lindale@nostrino@aol.net)

Every copy is individually numbered. Please indicate in your order whether you wish your copy to be signed (by at least one of the co-authors) and, if so, to whom the salutation should be inscribed.

CULT MOVIES

EUROPEAN TRASH CINEMA

AMERICA'S PREMIER SOURCE
FOR
EUROPEAN EXPLOITATION

&
GENRE
FILMS
ON
VIDEO

• Craig Ledbetter has been collecting European trash videos since 1981, earning the distinction of being referred to as America's #1 expert on the "Golden Age" of European exploitation cinema. He has amassed a library of roughly 5000 titles. *When you purchase from ETC you are tapping into an enormous private collection that expands at the rate of 40 titles a month!*



"EUROPEAN TRASH" is fast becoming a part of film fandom dialect. The term originated almost 15 years ago as the title of Craig Ledbetter's now legendary magazine of reviews and commentary...

ETC IS WHERE IT ALL BEGAN!

The focus at ETC is clear and precise: no porn, no anime, no oriental cinema, no music videos. ETC's catalogue is strictly devoted to the peak period of European exploitation and genre cinema, with special emphasis on amazing Italian films of the 60's and 70's.

*IF THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT,
ETC IS YOUR ULTIMATE SOURCE.*



Send \$3.00 for the ETC catalogue
of videos, magazines, and CDs to:

ETC VIDEO

P. O. BOX 12161, SPRING, TEXAS 77391-2161

EXPANDED BUSINESS HOURS FOR PHONE/FAX:

12:00 PM to 12:00 AM, 7 days a week, at 281-225-8031

For collectors who are on-line check out the cool ETC Video
Website at:

WWW.EUROPEANTRASHCINEMA.COM

• Through ETC all \$20.00 titles come in clam shell cases with color artwork. There is no need to settle for "soft but watchable" Unless otherwise noted every title is going to be of superior first-generation quality. Plus, ETC offers an excellent "bonus buy" policy - all orders over 5 titles generate free videos!

NIGHTS OF FUTURES PAST: AN INTIMATE INTERVIEW: FORREST J ACKERMAN CONDUCTED BY MICHAEL COPNER & COCO KIYONAGA

Walking along Hollywood Boulevard with Forry Ackerman our group passes the L. Ron Hubbard Dianetics Authors Foundation, which has a giant display window featuring sci-fi works of only L. Ron Hubbard. Ackerman stops, looks in at the paintings and books, wistfully shakes his head and sadly murmurs, "Hubbard played such an insignificant part in the overall scheme of things in science fiction literature. It's a shame they can't have something like this for someone more important like Ray Bradbury or Arthur C. Clarke." And that's all. We continue on down the hot summer evening boulevard, the sun mercifully setting on a Hollywood of record high temperatures. Forry is cool as ice cream in his Hawaiian shirt.

"He just doesn't get it, does he?" whispers one of the fans who are on this little walking tour. "Doesn't he know that Scientology pays for all that Hubbard promotion?"

Of course Ackerman "gets it". As a man who was L. Ron Hubbard's literary agent for years, he surely knows the score. Anyone who lives in Hollywood gets enough offers to take the free "Personality Test" from Scientology. And as a gentleman who's devoted his life to SF, Ackerman simply wishes the tourists and people who live here could be met with some temple of good, pure, true SF and Fantasy. And so in this direction, for some 40 years his home has been that museum; the famed Ackermansion visited by fans from around the world on open house Saturdays.

Six months ago I attended one of the best open houses I've ever seen at Forry's. On this occasion the group came equipped with just the right balance of curiosity, knowledge, reverence and newness to it all, and Forry responded by being the most out-of-this-world host, tour-guide, and teller-of-tales I'd ever seen him be. The conditions for a fun day were optimal.

Every public person falls back on a staple of stories and stock material. It prevents them from being at a loss for things to converse about, but may cause them to appear contrived, stale and impersonal to those who've never lived a life in the public scrutiny. On this day Forry brought out his

assured crowd-pleasers, such as the one about the young child claiming it's Vincent Price on the American penny. Or about 4E writing the Karloff record album script and watching in the recording studio as, "...every word that came out of Boris' mouth was put in there by me." He told slightly ribald background stories about paintings of Martian ladies on his walls. If you've been around FJA, you know these stories. On this magical Saturday he recounted them as if for the first time. Perfectly, to a spellbound

inspirational moments when they perform better than they usually do. It just HAPPENS. Sometimes they get the feeling of the music playing them, rather than the other way around. In any event, it was a very special day at Ackerman's, and I felt Heaven might be an eternity of that Saturday afternoon.

Sadly, that was among the last of the open houses there will ever be at the Ackermansion.

Four months ago Forry entered a Los



audience who stood and sat around him in his living room, silently and delightfully basking in the glow of The Master's verbal spell.

All the puns were good, and they got the desired laughs at the proper time. Forry was the most charming man in all the universes, and I wished that afternoon never had to end. (I've since wondered if the three dozen guests that day could feel the EXTRA special quality of the whole thing? Or if Ackerman felt it was exceptional, or was it just a Saturday like any other?) Concert artists who present the same repertoire of songs for a lifetime are sometimes conscious of

Angeles hospital for a series of operations that have left him unable to keep the big house. Though he's made a remarkable recovery, he's weakened from nearly 3 months in the hospital. He's making every effort to resume his local activities and national convention appearances, but he definitely feels the large house is too much to care for, and plans to relocate to much smaller headquarters, in an area closer to Hollywood. Much of his collection is going on auction as we go to press. At the same time he is readying plans for his 86th Birthday.

What follows here is an interview with FJA

conducted over a period of several weeks, just months before his entrance to the hospital. Recorded at leisure over supper and dessert at The House of Pies, one of Forry's many local Hollywood haunts, these discussions centered on people and events not frequently discussed about FJA and his life in science fiction.

CM: At your house I was looking at your various awards from the science fiction field. What is the Bob Clampett Humanitarian Award?

FJA: When they started the first Comic Cons in San Diego, I was invited as a guest of honor and they felt that helped their attendance. I don't suppose they had more than a hundred people at the first ones. Now it's one of the biggest events of its kind and I'm still an invited guest each year. But when Bob Clampett died, his widow and son wanted him to be remembered with an award, to be given in San Diego. And to my great surprise I was granted the first Bob Clampett Award.

CM: There's probably an interesting story to

go with every award in your showcase.

FJA: I guess so. There's a story I find amusing from 1953 about the Hugo Award being inaugurated for the best of SF editors and authors. And just once they had one and never repeated it, and I received it, for the Best Fan of the Year. And I felt that if this was a kind of life achievement thing, okay; but if it was for the best fan for that year, I didn't really feel it should go to me. I felt that the best fan work was done by a British fellow named Kenneth Slater, who was much more prominent that year than I was. So I think I held the award when I stood up to the microphone and said, "I'm really thrilled to receive this, but if there's a fan here who can take this back to England to Mr. Slater, I feel he's much more worthy of it than I." And when I sat down my wife was FURIOUS with me, saying, "Forry how could you disgrace yourself and this whole convention? Why, they've voted this for you and you've given it away!" She made me feel I'd done such a dumb thing, that for the only time in the 56 World Cons that I've attended, I refused to attend the costume masquerade,

for fear everyone would be likewise furious with me.

Next morning as I crept silently to the hotel lobby, way early for my breakfast, Robert Bloch found me and said, "Forry, where were you last night? Everybody loved that wonderful gesture..." and went on with a hands-across-the-sea speech with me linking America and Britain, and so on. So I needn't have feared.

And then years later, a man who was not present at that con, wrote a book and he let me read the portion of it about me before it was published. He reported that, "When Forry Ackerman was awarded the Hugo, he took the little toy rocket award and gave it away." Obviously that is a totally inaccurate rendition of the events. I didn't regard it as a toy at all, and it wrenched my heart to give it away. Furthermore, I didn't just hand it away, I sent it to a deserving fan three thousand miles away with a blessing and thanks from me. I tried to get this author to appreciate the differences, and to revise and correct the story, but it went into print that way.

CM: Who wrote it?

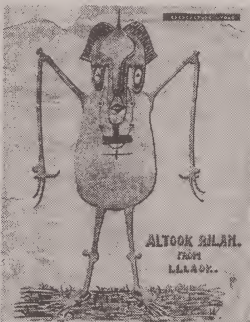
FJA: It was a book by Richard Lupoff. When the first *Famous Monsters* came out he called it *Forry's Folly*. Six years later his son was such a fan of the magazine he asked Richard, "Dad, can we take Forry to lunch?" The son really loved what we were doing in the magazine.

At a particular World Con, one speaker was concluding and the auditorium was emptying out, and some fans began to cluster around me asking questions and wanting autographs. This was going on as the auditorium was starting to fill up for the next presentation. We were slow in getting this group of fans out, and Dick Lupoff came out demanding, "For god's sake, Forry! Get these creeps out of here!" I don't think he liked our monster fans.

CM: The price of fame.

FJA: The Science Fiction Academy had a pretty good idea, which I don't think they've kept up, called the Retroactive Hugos. They started giving them first in 1953. So then they started to imagine who they would have awarded them to if they'd been doing the awards back in 1943. They'd kind of travel back in time. So I have two Retro Hugos, one 1st Hugo, and three foreign Hugo Awards from Italy, Japan, and Germany. Also, the widow of Hugo Gernsback gave me his own award.

One year Hugo Gernsback got his nose a little out of joint and said, "I've never even seen one of these things!" I was at the Con in Chicago, but he was not present. I was traveling on to New York where he had his office, and I agreed to take the award to him. That was one of the highlights of my life, to visit the man who inspired me to read science fiction, to be able to walk into his



Many moons ago, Grandfather Wyman drew ellen caricatures which kept young Forry fascinated with science fiction

office and give a Hugo to Hugo.

Another delight of my life was my own fanzine called *The Image-Nation*. In those days all the magazines out there, such as *Planet*, *Amazing Stories*, and *Wonder Stories*, all had readers departments but you could only talk about the contents of that title. In my fanzine we could discuss any magazine, any book, any author. I also reproduced everyone's autograph in the zine, which would be easier had we had Xerox machines in those days. There were 50 issues of that fanzine, but after 49 issues I was out of the army and now a civilian, and realized I had to keep my body and non-existent soul together, and just didn't have time for a fanzine. But I wanted to end it with a blaze of glory.

My favorite story is "The World Below," by S. Fowler Wright. There's a cast of characters in it such as a futuristic woman evolved from a seal, called The Amphibian, and at least half a dozen other of these evolved characters. It was as if you'd traveled 500,000 years into the future and found the variously evolved beings, and I wanted a particular scene of them depicted on my cover. So I contacted an artist named Hannes Bok, copied that passage from the book to give him, and told him exactly what I wanted. You can't imagine my excitement when that package arrived with his painting in it. I performed a bit of a strip tease on the package, peeling just a bit of the paper away to reveal a little more at a time of the artwork inside. A bit more, and a bit more. And if someone had been photographing my face they would have seen it slowly falling as the picture was finally revealed in full. I was totally disenchanted with the artwork, and it wasn't at all what I had wanted. It was an abstract rendering, I suppose you could call it surrealistic, but it wasn't at all like the photographic realism of that scene that I'd desired.

So to give it the benefit of the doubt, I took the artwork to show at our science fiction club and asked the members to look it over and help me decide. They'd read the passage of the book and knew what I was looking for. We weren't judging it positively or negatively on quality, but the fans agreed it wasn't that photographic detail the art should have. I contacted Hannes and said, "I wouldn't take it on myself to reject something of yours, but the fans feel this isn't quite right..."

And he was enraged. He wrote right back and said, "Send me that artwork back, you can't have it under any conditions." I think to his dying day, dear Hannes never forgave me. I don't know what happened to his rendering; I've never seen it in any reproductions of his artwork. In the end I got Lewis Goldstone up in San Francisco to give me exactly what I wanted for my 50th and final issue of *Image-Nation*.

CM: There's a kind of food-chain of publishers wherein Ray Ferry wanted to be James Warren, and James Warren wanted to be Hugh Hefner.

FJA: I wonder who Hugh Hefner wanted to be?

CM: Do people ask you about James Warren a lot?

FJA: The subject comes up once in a while, though he once mentioned it was better we worked 3,000 miles apart when we were doing *Famous Monsters*.

CM: And when did you first meet Hugh Hefner?

FJA: It was during the 50th Anniversary of King Kong, and quite a few celebrities were present. Fay Wray was there, and the woman who doubled for Fay up in the tree when the tyrannosaurus rex is after her. Ray Harryhausen and Ray Bradbury were driven up Hollywood Boulevard in a classic car. John Landis came to the festivities and bought a model dinosaur from Kong for \$50,000 on the spot. Later there was a party and Hugh Hefner was there, and we talked a lot. He's a very nice person.

Some time later when Hugh had put out a book about the Playboy Bunnies and he was doing an autograph session, I got his book signed and we spoke again for quite a while. He's never come up to my house to see the museum, though he'd be welcomed.

CM: Speaking of Kong, you once mentioned that when you saw the premier of King Kong at Graumann's Chinese Theater, during the final scenes on the Empire State Building, the masking opened up to wide screen size.

FJA: It opened up horizontally and vertically. I think when the projectionist changed over the last reel, the projector had a different lens and aperture plate, which greatly enlarged the picture on the screen. It gave it fantastic impact. I've only seen that effect done twice in films. In *Hell's Angels* and again at the end of *Portrait of Jennie*. In those days it was another treat like the color tinting in *Frankenstein*, and if they did these things right it could really "wow" an audience.

CM: What are your 10 favorite films?

FJA: In all genres?

CM: Sure. Anything you like.

FJA: *Metropolis*, *Frankenstein*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *King Kong*, *African Queen*, *History is Made at Night*, *Casablanca*, *The Exorcist*, *Green Mile*, and *The Jolson Story*.

CM: Anyone you want to meet?

FJA: Madonna, Valerie Bertolini, and Jacqueline Smith.

CM: All brunette women. And what does the "J" stand for in your name?

FJA: Jehovah, and your my witness.

Actually, my father in the business world was the assistant to the manager of transportation in what is today the Getty Oil Company. He admired a man in the office named James Clark, so he named me Forrest James Ackerman. I've never so much as seen a picture of the man. Only thing is that shortly after I was born, they decided they liked the name Clark better and began calling me that. Until I was 12 years old I thought I was Forrest Clark Ackerman and you can actually find some letters from me in print with that name on them. Then I ran across a birth certificate and found that, lo and behold, I was really Forrest James.

That was around the time I was getting interested in numerology, and I tried each of

these three names and found that Forrest J was the best numerologically and so dropped the "ames" in James and have been Forrest J Ackerman since then.

CM: Is there anyone else in your capacity in all the world, or are you the only one possible?

FJA: Well, there is a fan named Jerry Weist who recently acquired my 75 years of fan magazines and is going to add a new wing to his home to house all the magazines. Each of them will have a sticker stating, "From the collection of FJA." And there's a young fan named John L. Coker III who is trying to catch up and read everything from the 1930's onward, in all the fanzines and so forth. Those are two that I can think of.

CM: Do fanzines still proliferate in this computer age?

FJA: Oh yes! And there's still a need for them. There's a fan who subscribes to every fanzine in the field and every month sends me a big package of them. So they're still going strong.

CM: You're pretty much an original, a one-of-a-kind, and it doesn't seem that you patterned yourself after anyone else.

FJA: The only thing might be my hair, which I patterned after an actor named Warren Williams. He played in *The Dragon Murder Case* and half a dozen other "Murder Case" films for Warner Brothers. And my moustache I grew in the style of someone I met in World War II during my stint in the army.

CM: Some people have shown pictures where you resemble Ed Wood.

FJA: I've always seen the resemblance to Vincent Price, but not Ed Wood.

CM: Last night I was talking with filmmaker Ray Greene. I told him I'd be interviewing you today and he wanted me to ask you, given your association with L. Ron Hubbard, if you had ever used one of those electronic devices alleged to guide a person back to "clear." It looks a bit like a lie detector...

FJA: Yes, I know what you mean. About 1928 the man who created that device had a story printed in *Amazing Stories* magazine. I believe it was called "The Mongolian Ray." I met him during the Dianetics days, and he was a guest in my home. But I never had occasion to use his polygraph device.

CM: Do you remember the EST training courses? It was something like Dianetics with a different name. It eventually became Lifespring.

FJA: Is Lifespring still around? I went through their course. It was a good positive thinking seminar. They never want you to discuss what goes on at their meetings. But I'll tell you one thing that was so amusing, where they had us in a circle and said, "Look around and pick out the one person you seem to dislike the most." And they're supposed to tell them all the things they dislike about that person. And I thought, "I can't do that—it's totally against my nature." But people paired off until there were only four or five of us left and it looked like nobody was going to choose me. One of the

few people left was a gorgeous young woman and I chose her and told her, "There's absolutely nothing about you I dislike. Everything about you seems fine." And then the instructor revealed that the person you chose would most resemble yourself! And here I am praising her to the skies!

CM: In your first year as a literary agent how many writers did you pick up to represent?

FJA: About 200.

CM: In one year? That's fantastic!

FJA: Not really. In those early years I was taking on anyone who could string two words together. Some of them, like Charles Beaumont, turned out to be pretty good. Others of them were time wasters.

CM: Were those tough negotiations selling science fiction to the magazines?

FJA: No, not really. With some 25 periodicals out there starving for new material each issue, and me specializing in exactly the kind of fiction they needed, it was really a good situation.

CM: These days when you appear at the conventions, what is the age group that seems most attracted to you?

FJA: I'd say the age 20 to 50 is the majority age group, and then a dwindling group of old timers from the early days. It's sorta sad for me to think that I've got more friends and associates who are dead now, than living.

CM: It's hard to believe that the phenomenal monster craze of the 1960's took place forty years ago. By 1966 it was a fading trend, and we've never seen anything like it since then. To a lot of us "monster boomers" it seemed possible because of the melding of several generations of entertainment on black and white television, and equally because of your writing in *Famous Monsters*. Do the 1960's seem as significant to you, in retrospect? Or did you EVER think the 1960's were something special?

FJA: You'd have to remind me of the things you mean. If you're just talking about the films alone, I'd say the best years for fantasy output would be from 1926 to 1936. If I had to save ten years worth of film, and I couldn't jump around from year to year, it had to be one continuous decade, I'd say that would be the period of most importance. It would include some of Lon Chaney's greatest work, and on into the dawning of the sound classics with Karloff and Lugosi, and King Kong in 1933, and a fairly continuous flow of early sci-fi films like *The Invisible Ray*. I had the best of it all during that decade, and that was the era that was special to me. From then on the output became more sporadic, with occasional highlights like *Dr. Cyclops*, or *The Exorcist* as standouts.

CM: In the 1960's I believe reading was more critical to the horror film fans.

FJA: That may be true. It was in the 1965 that my wife Wendy and I took our 8700 mile road trip to meet 1300 readers of *Famous*

Monsters, and we ran into all kinds of funny situations. At first we had no way of being sure what kind of reception we'd get. In one case a young fan's parents wanted to talk to me. He got me aside and said, "I was afraid my son would never start reading much, but because of his enthusiasm for your magazine he's started going to the library and bringing home books by H.G. Wells, Poe, Jules Verne, and really getting into classical literature." And most of our meetings were positive ones, like that. And once someone gets grounded in a subject, their interests will broaden in other directions. It takes something to plant the seeds, get their minds working creatively.

CM: Do you have reflections of the legendary heroes of the baby boom generation, such as John Kennedy, or Elvis, or Marilyn Monroe?

FJA: I really loved Marilyn as an actress, although I didn't pay much attention to her personal life. It was a true shock the day I picked up the phone and some friend called to tell me that Marilyn had just committed suicide. A light went out of my life.

A client of mine, Charles Beaumont, who wrote a great deal of the *Twilight Zone* episodes, told me about the day he was driving down Sunset Boulevard in his open air car, and a good looking girl came struggling along the street with a bunch of groceries. He slowed down and offered her a ride. So they rode all the way to one end of Sunset, turned around and rode all the way back, chatting happily all the way. Finally he drove her to her destination and she offered to give him her phone number. But he was a good Catholic husband and a father of four children, and he was afraid to take the home phone number of Marilyn Monroe. As for Kennedy, I don't think we paid as much attention to a president's indiscretions

as we do now with a Bill Clinton situation. It wasn't so publicized and their sex lives weren't public concern. I think nowadays people want a saint who's not a very strong leader, or else a great leader who has feet of clay.

CM: What's your definition of a cult film?

FJA: Obviously a film that catches on with a certain faction of the public, developing a following for a time, whether the mainstream accepts it or not. A cult movie can evolve out of any genre.

Starship Troopers wasn't a cult film. It was just a well made film that became popular right away with the general public.

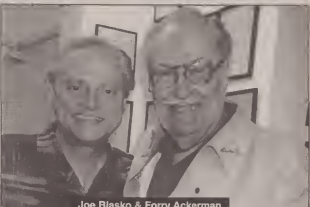
CM: I guess it doesn't hurt to be called "worst film of all time" the way *Plan 9* was, whether it really was the worst or not.

FJA: I'm beginning to wonder if *Battlefield Earth* isn't going to replace it as the new worst. To some people, "cult" sounds like a bad thing, to others it sounds respectable. Enough people like the implication that you should keep calling your magazine "cult."

CM: Thanks, Forry. We will. ---

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

Forrest J Ackerman will be celebrating his 86th birthday on November 23rd this year. If you are interested in attending please contact cult-movies.com for more information as soon as possible. Space is extremely limited. So don't delay! Up, up and away with 4-E J!!!! Best Wishes to you, Uncle Forry!!!



Joe Blasko & Forry Ackerman

William Winckler

CM: The *Double-D Avenger* has been a great success for your company. Can you tell us how it all started and how you got into show business?

WW: Well, first of all, I come from a show business background. My late father, Robert "Bobby" Winckler, was a known child actor in Hollywood during the 1930's and '40s. Between the ages of eight and eighteen, he worked in over eighty films, and over two-hundred radio shows with all the stars of the Golden Age of Hollywood. Charlie Chaplin's wife, Mildred Harris, got my father into showbiz with a letter of introduction to Hal Roach studios. From there he worked in a dozen *Little Rascals/Our Gang* comedy shorts, he played W. C. Fields son, and worked with hundreds of stars such as Edward G. Robinson, Eddie Cantor, Gene Autry, Pat O'Brien, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, and Shirley Temple. Cult Movies readers might be interested to know that he rode in the Hollywood Christmas Parade with Boris Karloff, and accidentally kicked Boris in the head! Boris turned around and told my Dad, "Not too many children can kick *Frankenstein* and get away with it!"

My Dad later went to college and got interested in law. He became a successful entertainment attorney, representing people both in front of the camera and behind. Unfortunately, he died of cancer in 1989.

CM: Did you work as an actor?

WW: Yes, earlier on. As a teenager, and into my twenties, I did episodes of shows like *Remington Steele*, and commercials for IBM. But, my real love was writing, producing and directing. I studied directing and acting with the late Don Richardson, who taught Anne Bancroft, Zero Mostel, John Cassavetes, and others. I learned a great deal from Don.

The first TV series I wrote and produced was an animated sci-fi show called *Tekman the Space Knight*. I used residual money I was earning from my acting to finance *Tekman*. The series was animated by Tatsunoko Productions, creators of *Speed Racer* and *Robotech*. This was in the mid to late 1980's, way before the anime boom. I syndicated the show nationwide, and it also sold well on home video. I was the youngest producer of a TV series, being just eighteen. *Tekman* was about a young space pilot named Barry Gallagher, who donned an indestructible suit of armour, becoming a hero to battle evil alien robots. We got great ratings and positive fan mail.

CM: What projects did you do next?

WW: After that I wrote and produced a comedy variety series called *Short-Ribbs*, which starred the late midgeet actor Billy Barty. He was the executive producer and star of the show, I was producer and main writer. It was like *Saturday Night Live* with little people. We aired in Los Angeles on Saturday nights in prime-time on KDOC-TV, with 7-Up sponsoring. The show had great potential, but Barty didn't delegate authority, and I feel that because of his destructive

control of the series, it only lasted one season. He did good things in his life, like his charity golf tournaments, but to me he was a nightmare. Other cast members like Patty Maloney and Jimmy Briscoe were wonderful to work with. What is tragic about *Short Ribbs*, is that it really had the potential to be a very successful show, and it was Barty's last shot at a TV series of his own.

CM: What followed *Short Ribbs*?

WW: I developed movie projects for a toy company, and was later head of talent at an internet company called Galaxy Online. I was developing original movies for webcasting (and later for direct-to-video and DVD) with stars such as Michael York, Bill Mumy, Walter Koenig and others. When the dot-com bubble burst, Galaxy burst too.

So last year I formed my own independent



company, William Winckler Productions. I have always loved B-movies, cult films, sci-fi, and adventure. I love the films of the 1960s, the AIP stuff, Corman's work, and wanted to recreate the look and feel of them. Thus, *The Double-D Avenger*. The film is essentially the Russ Meyer "reunion film" that Russ never made. It stars his most famous busty actresses. There are a few other Russ Meyer actresses around, but the three I cast, Kitten Natividad, Haji, and Raven De La Croix, have the most marquee name value, and have the most TV and film credits.

CM: How'd you come up with the idea?

WW: I wanted to start the company off with a character who could appear in a series. I've always loved costumed superheroes, and Russ never did any movies about those. So, I came up with a whacked-out "Wonder Woman" type of character who uses her super-boobs to fight crime! It's a sexy, action comedy. I've incorporated the sexiness of the Russ Meyer films, with the action of the old Republic serials, and added comedy bits in the vein of Benny Hill.

This is not a typical mainstream Hollywood production in any shape or form. I don't think there are too many independents like me around, successfully making profits from their films. The climate is tough today, since we have an oligopoly running Hollywood. Seven major companies controlling most of our TV and film production and distribution, pretty much putting independents out of business, especially genre indies. Is this a violation of state and federal anti-trust laws? Yes. Is anyone doing anything about it? No, other than producers like Lloyd Kaufman

from Troma complaining publicly about this problem.

CM: What was it like working with the cast?

WW: Great. No problems. Weeks before filming, I rehearsed the cast. I worked with Kitten a great deal privately, going over her part line by line. I think this was the best role Kitten ever had. Forry Ackerman was super, and my cinematographer, Raoul J. Germain Jr., was fantastic. He lit and shot the movie for film - we used state-of-the-art digital video. And the final footage looked like 35mm film.

CM: Any funny incidents occur while filming?

WW: During the wax museum scenes, there were statues of some of Kitten's ex-lovers, such as Tony Curtis and Tom Selleck. I asked Kitten what Selleck was like, and to my surprise, she cried out, "Hung like a horse!" For certain FX shots of the *Double-D Avenger* jumping, Kitten couldn't do it, nor could Dezzrae Ascalon (my then assistant who's now my wife!) So, believe it or not, I did some of the stunts! I actually put on the wig, *Double-D* costume, fake breasts, and did the flips, to the amusement of the crew! Hopefully we got enough footage so I'll never have to do that again.

I must praise G. Larry Butler, who played the main villain. Larry carried half the movie, and did an awesome job, doing his Jackie Gleason-type character. He performed a style of heightened acting you rarely see today.

CM: There's a strong nostalgic element.

WW: Yes. I love the classic cult movies. There's a strong emotional tie there. Having been involved with mainstream Hollywood productions, I can't stand to watch most of them. The material all looks the same, sounds the same, is edited the same, and the casting is similar, with people who look like Hollywood actors, not characters. I could probably make two-hundred movies on the budget of just one average Hollywood flick. The crazy thing is that many indie filmmakers shoot movies that are audition reels for the big time. They make these as calling cards, so they can get jobs with major studios.

I'm making movies for a specific cult film audience. I don't care about the mainstream, and my films aren't audition reels for work at the majors. I like making entertaining entertainment, with characters in larger than life situations. Not pedestrian, talking head dramas. We already live in real life, and I think our entertainment should take us out of ourselves. People need escapism, and that's what I aim for when I produce a film.

CM: What's next for you?

WW: I'll be shooting *Double-D Avenger Part II*, early next year. We'll have another Russ Meyer name in Lori Williams. Also, Butch Patrick from the original *Munsters* TV show will play a major role.

CM: Thank you for your time.

WW: The pleasure is all mine! Ta-ta! I mean, ta-ta!!

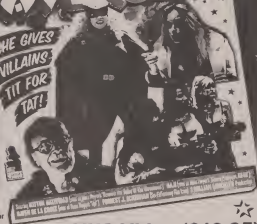
Get *Double-D Avenger* through their website doubledavenger.com, Amazon.com; Movies Unlimited; etc. Some specialty retailers carry it, such as Eddie Brand's Saturday Matinee in Los Angeles.

☆☆☆☆ THE RETURN OF ☆☆☆☆ RUSS MEYER'S "BIG GIRLS!"

Cult cinema's famous "Big Girls" are back again, in the new bro-busting movie masterpiece of all time!

THE DOUBLE-D AVENGER

SHE GIVES
VILLAINS
TIT FOR
TAT!



Approx.
77 mins.
18 & over

VHS Video (\$19.95) DVD (\$24.95)

FANS!!!!...Order Online at
www.doubledavenger.com
or call 818-773-3230

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

KITTEN NATIVIDAD

Star of Russ Meyer's
"Faster Pussycat Kill Kill"

HAJI

Star of Russ Meyer's
"Faster Pussycat Kill Kill"

RAVEN DE LA CROIX

Star of Russ Meyer's "Up!"

FORREST J. ACKERMAN

Sci-Fi/Fantasy Film Icon

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Big, busty Chastity Knott must use
her new amazing abilities as the
super-stacked costumed crime
fighter, the DOUBLE-D AVENGER,
to stop villainous bikini bar
owner Al Purplewood and his
sexy, murderous strippers.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Produced by

William Winckler Productions, Inc.,
(not affiliated with RM Films International)

STUFF TO READ

A CULT CLASSIC

My Face



for the World to See
★ Liz Renay ★

MY FACE FOR THE WORLD TO SEE

(By LIZ RENAY, 457 pages, explicit illustrations, Bantam Books, July 2002, \$27.95)

Liz Renay is one of the most remarkable women that I have had the privilege to meet. She is also intelligent, bubbly and fun blended with one of the most beautiful faces in the world, and the most amazing eyes, and yet they do appear have a polka dot pattern. I could not get over her stunning beauty. But it is not just physical beauty, there is an innocence and sweetness within that keeps her from the handsome one would expect from the like she has been exposed to. The moment I met her I realized that she was a good person. There is an inner glow that radiates from her despite the difficult past that she has had to endure.

MY FACE FOR THE WORLD TO SEE reads like fiction, from the first page until the last, I was glued to each page. Miss Renay is completely open about her life and gives detailed information about each segment of her life and the men that she shared her life with. Born in Mesa, Arizona to a family of religious zealots. It is amazing that she did not become one herself. Running away from the life she was born into the soon became the toast of New York as well as a candidate and girlfriend to mobsters and Mafia hitmen as well as a trusted friend. When she moved to Hollywood to find her fortune, Cecil B. DeMille saw her at a lunch and wanted to sign her to star in one of his films, that is until she was arrested and led from out on handcuffs before his horrified eyes.

She became a good friend to mobster Mickey Cohen and committed perjury on his behalf and was sentenced to three years in Federal Island prison. Even in prison, she was beloved and protected by her fellow inmates. I could go on and on about her life, but you should read my life for yourself, because no one could tell her life story better than Miss Renay herself. Viva Liz Renay!

bantambooks.com
crazezone@hotmail.com

Reviewed by Coco Kiyonaga

SMOKIN' ROCKETS: The Romance of Technology in American Film, Radio and Television, 1945-1962

(By Patrick Luciano and Gary Caville, 246pp, \$15 softcover, Filmography, bibliography, illustrated)

Science and technology had a significant audience in American culture and thought in the years immediately following World War II. The new wonders of science and the threat of the Soviet Union as a powerful new enemy made Sci-Fi a popular genre in radio, TV, and film. Mazine creations, spawned by radioactive energy and electromagnetic discharging, horrific weapons on Earth were characteristic of SF at the time and served as warnings to the very real dangers posed by the atomic age.

This book examines science-fiction fiction in American culture starting in the year World War II ended and ending in 1962, the year of John Glenn's orbital flight and the Cuban Missile Crisis. The radio work of Arch

Oboler and the significance of his "Rocket from Manhattan," which aired only one month after the dropping of the first atomic bomb and asked serious questions about the use of atomic energy are examined. Other topics are the conflict between the new world and the Communist world in the context of SF plot lines, the dangers of science as shown in films like *Godzilla*, *Them*, *The Day the Earth Shook*, and radio and TV programs, the flying saucer phenomenon and the treatment of alien stories in the media with attention given to the 1956 documentary *UFO's*, the changing and more positive depiction of science, the shift in the balance of world power due to the launching of Sputnik by the Russians in 1957, the end of the world theme in SF and the American journey into space.

These subjects are handled dead serious, and live on into the present. Each broadcast of Art Bell's all-night radio show, where the real life implications of science, technology, UFO's and so on, are the order of the night for five hours. But that is not the province of within the boundaries of this book. Perhaps Luciano and Caville will make that the subject of their next volume. As it is, this is a thoroughly researched, thought provoking look at the border where real life meets with science fiction, itself a hybrid concept. Every SF fan will want to add this to his bookshelf.

(Available from McFarland & Company, Box 511, Jefferson, NC 28640. Orders at 800-353-8187, www.wmcfarlandpub.com)

Reviewed by Gino Colletti

CINEMA UNDER THE STARS: America's Love Affair with the Drive-In Theater

(By Elizabeth McKoon and Linda Everett, 300 pages, \$14.95)

It's hard to believe there was a time when more than 4,000 drive-in theaters were scattered across the American landscape; their garish neon lights blinking in the night, their screens lit with western shoot-outs, atomic monster invasions, and bikini beach parties. Authors McKoon and Everett chronicle the lifeline of the outliers of the year from their initial inception by Richard M. Hoffend, Jr., in Camden, New Jersey, to their eventual decline as Americans turned to the pleasures of cable television and then eventually, videocassette. In their presentation, McKoon and Everett attempt to touch upon all the major reasons audiences went to the drive-in: people to visit their open-air, backyard theaters; playgrounds and teen rites for the kids; laundry waiting and grocery shopping services for Mom and Dad; and, of course, the stars. Stars are shown, as an still from classic films: *Conquering the Planet*, *Remember*, *Paradise, Please*, *Candy*, *Popcorn* and *Sparkling Soda*. The ones who sang, "Let's all go to the lobby to get together in a treat!" They're here along with the *B-B-Q*, sex scenes and *Chubby Daily* pebble ads, and a real food reminder to return the speaker to its pool before leaving the drive-in.

Drive-ins also extol the virtues and conveniences of local theaters as "Come as you are," "Eat, drink and theater," "No babysitter problem," "No parking problems," "No-leech heaters available," and "Great for staid men!" Highly illustrated, this is a great trip down memory lane for passion pit enthusiasts, and Elacop high school will find a wealth of info within the text. The book also includes info on leaving. The Drive-In Theater Fun Club and an ad for Fun, Food & Fun, a guidebook to operational drive-ins across the country. (Cambridge House/Borderbooks International 800-826-4680)

THE JAMES WARREN COMPANION: The Definitive Compendium to the Great Comics of Warren Publishing

(Edited by David A. Roach and Jon B. Cooker, 270 pages, illustrated, annotated, paperback, \$29.95)

James Warren has an empire of horror gets the full dramatic story treatment in this astounding book. You'll see the history of James Warren's Comics, *Swampy*, *Wasp*, *Monster*, *Man*, as well as some of the lesser known or later-in-the-day Warren publications such as *Blazing Comet*, *Cosmos International*, and the carry-all title of "C.O. The Comic."

The erratic nature of Warren's newsstand distribution, as well as the water works of the mail order entry, Captain Company, are get the full treatment (in one case, with an interview with the woman who manages the Captain Company offices for several years, and now tells the secrets!). There is a definitive Warren title checklist, listing content, lengths and as such had a few standouts. A number of other artists who worked on the Warren comics. Most importantly, there is an interview with James Warren himself, along with his idol Will Eisner (The two were close friends and good friends).

There's a highly unusual thing about this book. This is a revealing book about the subject at hand. Mr. James Warren, it's also an in-depth memoir about you, the Warren magazines. Probably anyone reading these words was a fan of Warren magazines. It's a book that will lead you to find their sites, or depend on the mail order department to process your purchases of subscriptions, back issues, 8mm films, spooky records, and items, live

monkeys, and so on. Reading this book and pages through the vast assortment of collected eye-candy from the past will bring those days ready to life again. I learned a lot, had a lot of questions answered about James Warren, and behind-the-scenes of the Warren publishing empire, but somehow I kept getting the feeling that this was a history of me, or at least many of my ancestor collecting skeletons of the 1960's. It's the story of our generation, and the story of the Warren Editor Jon B. Cooker has joined forces with historian David Roach to compile a definitive book on the film and comic world of a true trail-blazer.

How many get that feeling more than in the personal interview they print with The Man named Jon Warren reflects on how he was thrown out of advertising agency after agency by men who equaled his monster magazine in pornography, science, and sex, and a successful advertising man, had done his homework, and sent a man prepared to illustrate the demographics of his new James Warren magazine. He showed him books or an action company, Warren said, show how his readers would have the disposable cash (at that time) to spend on these products. Some representatives (and Warren remembers their names) told him, "We wouldn't advertise in this truly magazine if you paid US to advertise in it." Some feelings were behind it, but not so much. Warren's even told Warren to come into the actual offices to make his presentation.

So out of the office, Jon Warren got into the mail order business, turned the back pages of each magazine into a catalog for masks, models, and things we kids would like, and became very successful in his endeavor. It is a fascinating story, given told by Warren himself, in a well-illustrated segment on his life and career. The rest of the book lays out the ups and downs of several adventures decades, the "whys" of certain practices, added by other points of view with interviews from actors, editors, writers, and various employees of the firm. Warren talks about the reasons for the excessive use of reprints. Also about why comics occasionally appeared in (Adams) hand-drawn. Warren thought they were a good idea. Detailed, accurate reading.

There are two editions of this book available. A 272-page Trade Paperback, featuring a new painted color cover by Alex Ross, showing Warren surrounded by his monstrous creations. The price is \$28.00 U.S., which includes shipping.

Also available is a Limited Edition Hardcover (limited to 1000 copies) signed by Jon Warren, with custom endpapers and a signed photo of Warren. It is not in the Trade Paperback. A beautiful 288 page Hardcover, priced at \$57.00 U.S., which includes shipping.

(To order, check or money for desired edition to: Culm Morris, 2700 N. Hwy 1047, Hollywood, CA 90078)

Reviewed by Michael Copner

GOING TO PIECES: The Rise & Fall of the Slasher Film, 1978-1998

(By Andrew Sarris, hardback, illustrated, From McFarland and Company, Box 511, Jefferson, NC 28640)

With a cover still from *Killdozer*, and a title such as this, you know exactly what to expect. This is a nice, concise run down on lots of slasher films, both foreign and domestic, and the way they've impacted the genre and public over the years. Adam looks in on the early relatives of the cycle, such as the original *Pсихо*, before there really was a cycle, and shows how they played a part in the scheme of things 15 years later.

All kinds of surprises turn up. There's a still of Yvonne DeCarie, looking better than I remembered her, in *Sleazy Sixties* (1968). The author details and shows pictures from things like *Wives of Strangers* Club, but never pays much tribute or comparison to the granddads of them all, *Witchy Black Cat* & *I Saw What You Did*. All in all it's a good book, and those who like these films will enjoy reliving the "shock that was," when these things became commonplace in the theaters.

Reviewed by Coco Kiyonaga

FILM FATALES: Women in Espionage Film and Television, 1962-1973

(By Tom Liss, 304 pages, from McFarland & CO., 2002, 341 pages, including index)

As readers of *Culm Morris* books know, today our Abby Cadabba is making a minor industry out of Baby Boomers' high-school fantasies. First with *Baywatch* and *Star Trek* and now with *FBI* factor, Mr. Liss along with writing partner Louis Paul, cover the "Austin Powers" type genre from both sides of the Atlantic during it's decade of dominance.

After leading off with brief biographies of Max Hutz and Ian Fleming, Liss and Paul launch into the lives and careers of no less than one hundred and seven films and TV series. The authors are very good in the preface that due to space, they can't be all inclusive in the preface that in these pages we can't be all inclusive. *Martine Beswick* and *Alma* (the gypsy wildcats flying it out for her in *Seal of the Virgin*) are just a few of the women in the book. (Lady James Bond in *Cosmo* is not in the book.)

McFarland



"The king of the interviews
...Tom Weaver is amazing
...long may he rule"
— *Classic Images*

Science Fiction Confidential

Interviews with 23 Monster Stars and Filmmakers

Tom Weaver. 320pp., 2002, \$38.50 hardcover (7x10), 124 photos, filmographies, index, ISBN 0-7864-1175-9.



Film Fatales

Women in Espionage Films and Television, 1963-1973

Tom Liss and Louis Paul
Foreword by Eileen O'Neill
352pp., 2002, \$36.50 hardcover (7x10), 120 photographs, bibliography, filmographies, index, ISBN 0-7864-1194-5.



The Independent Film Experience

Interviews with Directors and Producers

Kerla J. Lindemann
Foreword by Fred Olen Ray
240pp., 2002, \$35 softcover (7x10), 127 photos, appendix, index, ISBN 0-7864-1075-2.



Going to Pieces

The Rise and Fall of the Slasher Film, 1978-1986

Adam Rockoff. 223pp., 2002, \$39.95 hardcover (7x10), 306 photos, notes, appendix, annotated bibliography, index, ISBN 0-7864-1227-5.



Cinema Arthuriana

Twenty Essays, revised edition

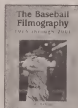
Edited by Kevin J. Hart. 317pp., 2002, \$39.95 hardcover (7x10), photos, notes, filmography, bibliography, index, ISBN 0-7864-1344-1.



The Cinema of Generation X

A Critical Study of Films and Directors

Peter Hanson. 227pp., 2002, \$35 softcover, photos, notes, filmography, appendices, bibliography, index, ISBN 0-7864-1334-4.



The Baseball Filmography

1915 through 2001, second edition

Hal Erickson. 560pp., 2002, \$45 hardcover (7x10), 89 photos, bibliography, index, ISBN 0-7864-1272-0.



H.G. Wells on Film

The Utopian Nightmare

Don G. Smith. 205pp., 2002, \$39.95 hardcover (7x10), photos, bibliography, index, ISBN 0-7864-1058-2.



The Cinema of Tsui Hark

The Utopian Nightmare

Lisa Morton. 256pp., 2001, \$45 hardcover (7x10), 59 photos, annotated bibliography, filmographies, listings, index, ISBN 0-7864-0990-8.

McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers

Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640 • 336-246-4460

FAX 336-246-5018 • Order 800-253-2187

www.mcfarlandpub.com

SHOCKING VIDEOS

HC77 BOX 111, HINTON, WV 25951 USA

Tired of empty "we're #1" hype, long waits, poor quality and new arrivals lists full of boring junk? Then, buddy, it's time you checked us out. Don't let the hillbilly mailing address fool you. We've got years of experience, worldwide contacts, state-of-the-art transfer equipment and an amazing selection of titles. Plus, all of our tapes come with an unconditional 30-day moneyback guarantee. But don't just take our word for it. Listen to what our customers are saying.

"I've been collecting for about a year and a half and I've browsed through many places like Bizarro Video, Video Junkie, Video Screens, Midnight Video, Ransom Note Graphics and others but you're the best"

A.P.

"I subscribe to a number of video companies but your selection and prices are the best overall, and your service is speedy too."

S.F.

"Just wanted to let you know how much I loved the videos you sent me. All the videos were excellent and the print quality was great too."

J.G.

"I was pleased with the reproduction quality—much better than those folks in Miami!"

R.G.

*"If you keep spooking me with this great service I just may have to quit doing business with VSoM and some of the others I have dealt with over the past 10 or 15 years. The best part is that you have s*** they wouldn't be able to find with both hands!"*

K.O.

Now we're not going to blow smoke up your skirt and tell you we have everything (nobody does). And we aren't going to try to hustle you into buying some clunker just because it's "rare." Outbreaks of cholera are rare too; that doesn't make them good. And we definitely won't waste your time and money with multiple generation dupes that look like they were recorded off a drive-in screen by a spy satellite on a foggy night.

What we will do is offer you the best possible videos at a fair price (\$15, or \$20 if it comes with color box art, plus postage), shipped in a reasonable amount of time (normally within two weeks or less of receiving your order) with a minimum of attitude.

What kind of videos? The odd, the obscure, the sought after, the kind you're looking for. Sure, we've got "shocking" ones, but that's only the beginning. Whether it's sleaze, horror, gore, porn, sexploitation, Eurotrash, drive-in swill, arthouse obscurities, martial arts mayhem, Third World weirdness, forgotten documentaries, or whatever, if it's overlooked, out of reach, or currently unavailable and it's weird, wild, or wonderful, then we're all over it like a cheap suit. Here's just a small sample of what we have to offer:

BAMBOO GODS AND IRON MEN; BOXER'S OMIN; BRIGADE DES MOEURS; A BULLET FOR PRETTY BOY; CANDICE CANDY; CULT OF THE DAMNED; DEATHMASTER; FORTY DEUCE; EMANUELLE IN AMERICA; GUYANA. CRIME OF THE CENTURY; HELL'S BLOODY DEVILS; HOTEL PARADISE; LIFE IS CHEAP... BUT TOILET PAPER IS EXPENSIVE; LONG WEEKEND; MISTER FREEDOM, MY FRIENDS NEED KILLING; NIGHTMARE COUNTY; NO MAN'S ISLAND, PERCY; OF FREAKS AND MEN, PRISON FOR WOMEN, PUNISHMENT PARK; RIOT ON SUNSET STRIP; SAFARI RALLY; SCHOOL FOR UNCLAIMED GIRLS; SOUL SOLDIER; SUNNYSIDE; SWINGING BARMAIDS; TAKING OFF; THREE TOUGH GUYS; TURKISH STAR WARS; TWISTED NERVE; WHITE DOG; YAKUZA CRUEL SECRETS; THE ZEBRA KILLER

To name just a few. So what are you waiting for? Send us \$3.00 along with your name, address and a 21+ age statement and we'll rush you our mind-boggling collector's catalog of video rarities from around the globe. And if you tell us which magazine you saw this ad in we'll even include a coupon good for \$5.00 off on your first order. What a deal! Order NOW!

"KICKING ASS AND TAKING NAMES"



BOWERY AT MIDNIGHT and DEVIL BAT

(2002, Lugosi Enterprises)

Here are the first two DVDs released by the son of Bela Lugosi. With all new packaging, bonuses such as a rare photo and poster gallery on each DVD, theatrical trailers, and many other goodies. The greatest thing about seeing these new releases is the commentary track which features Bela G. Lugosi discussing the film at hand with interviewer Ted Newsome. Not everyone could be lucky enough to have the son of "Dracula" in their homes, talking about the films of his dad. These DVDs are the next best thing. The commentaries are revealing, entertaining, and in some ways, the most intriguing material to be released about The Great Man in quite a while. Even though the commentary can be a bit sparse at times, one must realize how difficult it is to continually talk through a film. And anyone who has had contact with Bela G. Lugosi will know that he is a man of thought. He would not prattle just for the sake of filling up tape. Even if you have these classic films on home video in some other format, these new Lugosi Enterprises releases are worth adding to your collection.

There are other releases in the series on the way. We'll have a feature story about them in an upcoming issue.

Reviewed by Coco Kiyonaga

EAT THE RICH

(CUT THIRDTIME VIDEO, 87 mins.)

This film is writer/director Ron Atkins' attempt to recreate the gritty reality of the horror classic, *True Christmas*. Atkins' new film is unrated, but it contains series of violence, nudity and lots of "adult" language. I wonder what this WOULD be rated if he'd applied for a rating? His previous film was the horrifying *Necromaniacs*. In *EAT THE RICH*, an FBI agent is sent in to the underground scene of the Nevada desert to bust a family of cannibals. What he discovers in this world of flesh and bones may best have been left undiscovered? Ron's direction, and the able cast of Terry King, Jaemin Putnam, and Jennifer Atkins create a new level of shock in the world of indie productions. It traces dark humor with true terror creating a truly unusual mood.

WWW.CUTTHIRDTIMEVIDEO.COM

Reviewed by Coco Kiyonaga

HAUNTED WORLD OF EDWARD D. WOOD, JR.

(2002, Image Entertainment, 112 min.)

Wood is out! That's the Tim Burton docu-drama on Ed Wood as not going to be released on DVD for some time. I wonder why? In the meantime, if you want to have a Wooden experience, the best thing is this famous, all inclusive look at Eddie's life and films. The producers have covered all the bases. They've included a nearly seen TV pilot, *Cremaster* of Larrin, so you can see one way Ed Wood was trying to break into mainstream television director and actor. There are interviews with Conrad Brocks, Virginia, Norma McCarthy, and countless more players in the life of this alleged "worst director." As Bryan Singer, director of *X-Men* states "No matter what you've seen or read about Ed Wood, you must see THIS film." We couldn't agree more. To get further info, check out:

WWW.IMAGEENTERTAINMENT.COM or

WWW.DVDIMMORTAL.COM

Reviewed by Coco Kiyonaga

NEON GENESIS EVANGELION: DEATH**& REBIRTH** (2002, Manga Video, 115 mins.)

This is the first half of the two-part conclusion to the *Neon Genesis Evangelion* series. Its end-of-the-world Anime at its most imaginative. These are bio-engineered creatures, secret knowledge, out of this world sci-fi action, and the awakening of a new age of mankind. Featuring groundbreaking animated action sequences and dramatic revelations, this is a composition of epic proportions! The DVD is two-sided and includes tons of extra features, such as original Japanese trailers, subtitle options for dialogue, photo-gallery, and commentary by Amanda Wain Lee (English language Director and character voice in the feature). *Play Magazine* calls this "The Anime event of a Lifetime." Like most Anime, it covers some pretty mature themes, but life in this world is becoming true nature, it's time that our "cartoons" reflected this new reality MUCH MORE ANIME NEXT ISSUE!

**SATISFYING ALL YOUR CRAVINGS
FOR NOSTALGIC EXPLOITATION
& SXPLOITATION SINEMA!**

SEND \$5 FOR OUR HUGE CATALOG

OR VISIT US ONLINE AT

WWW.SOMETHINGWEIRD.COM!

SECURE ONLINE SHOPPING!

**ALL VIDEOS
\$15 EACH!**

**Special Edition
DVDs
available!**

**SOMETHING
WEIRD
VIDEO®**

POB 33664 SEATTLE, WA 98133

206-361-3759 • FAX 206-364-7526

Please state with
signature that you're 18+

CUMMING SOON! (2002, Lucky Banana Productions, 75 min.)

What a delight! The best adult DVD of the year is this

compilation of 1970s trailers. It was a theatrical phenomenon, the XXX onslaught that brought in countless new adult film stars, all collected on this silver disk. Linda Lovelace, Seta, John C. Holmes, Kay Parker, Linda Wong, and many more. Such titles as *Class Act*, *Erasmus*, *Tahiti*, *Erotic Adventures* of Candy are fading memories now, quality sex films with production values way above the shot on video output of today. But the 31 previews of coming attractions on this DVD will help recall the adult American scene, the coolest and the wildest films ever made for the sex cameras of the day.

Reviewed by Gino Colbert

HARDWARE WARS: collector's edition.

Colice. Approx 90 min. This film is legendary! To think that after all this time it has finally surfaced at an antique road show. Feel the tension, building as the whole story is laid open to our wondrous eyes. Enjoy the hour. Feel the waves of excitement build as you view this unriveted piece of film as the greatest face that ever lived! Anyone who stood in line for STAR 8045 will appreciate this piece of film footage that was lovingly crafted for future generations to come. Order your copy today! Check out these website: www.wmp.com

Best money you'll spend this month

Reviewed by Coco Kiyonaga

LORD OF THE DEAD

(Greg Parker, Productions 85 min./vhs)

(widescreen/Letterbox Edition)

You gotta see this one. It starts off with a really great character STEVE. This guy is lovable and yet something deeper must be lurking inside. He is the world's greatest grek and yet, is the second guy you'll ever want to be slamed with. This film has it all. Kinky women, the fetishes of youth, monsters, mayhem, the sweetness of true love. Monsters of the Dark and the Book of the Dead.

You can tell that this indie director went to film school and is one the high road to success. I am so impressed with this guy you should look for an interview all about him in an upcoming issue. Order this film today! Not only

is it worth the \$29.95 which includes tax and shipping you will get free stuff as well. Parker Films 2002 Denby Ave. Las Vegas, NV 89106 or try their website at www.LordOfTheDead.com. It's a hell of a website. You might even win an actual prop from the movie.

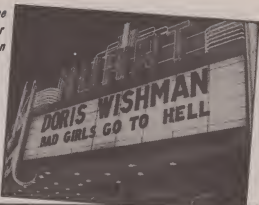
Reviewed by Coco Kiyonaga

**FEATURED FILM REVIEWS IN UPCOMING ISSUE WILL
INCLUDE: FATAL KISS by JEFF RECTOR, ONE OF THE
BEST CRAFTED INDIES OF THE YEAR.**

Writer and documentarian Ray Greene offers a memorial to the late director of such nudie cuties and exploitation films as *Nude on the Moon*, *Deadly Weapons*, and *Double Agent 73*.

When *Cult Movies* editor Mike Copner asked me to come up with a way of paying tribute to the inimitable Doris Wishman, I was at a loss. Having just made my own feeble attempt to honor late producer Sam Arkoff in the last issue of *CM*, here I was, being called on once again to perform the sad task of trying to summarize and quantify a person who defied all the known boundaries.

As with Sam, I owe Doris a professional debt thanks to her agreement to be one of the principal interviews in my documentary feature *SCHLOCK! The Secret History of American Movies* (a brief bio and photos of Doris are visible on our website at <http://schlockthemovie.com>). In Doris' case, the situation was complicated by the fact that she became a close personal friend, someone I exchanged carls and compliments with over the course of the last five years, and with whom I had the great pleasure of a joyous reunion at last year's Chicago Underground Film Festival. It was a magical encounter; not only did I get to see Doris' latest film *Satan Was a Lady* during one of



**"YOU'RE ONLY SAYING
THAT BECAUSE YOU WANT
TO PLAY A LESBIAN"**

Remembering Doris Wishman

BY RAY GREENE (AND FRIENDS) Photos courtesy
schlockthemovie.com



its earliest public screenings, I also witnessed the first ever public showing of her blighted '80s era "slasher" pic *A Night to Disremember* (see below for a remembrance of that experience). For her part, Doris' not only attended the festival screening of *SCHLOCK!* (thereby becoming only the third of its principal "stars" to see the film on the big screen) but I am told by those who sat near her she talked back to her one-time exploitation competitors David F. Friedman and Harry Novak every single time they appeared onscreen!

She loved the movie, though - thank God, because Doris could be a very, very tough audience. As I write this, I'm sitting with a glass of wine rereading again and again the card she sent me afterward (and fingering a treasured pair of Wishman sunglasses sent to replace the pair I gave her when her shades were mislaid on the second day of the Chi-fest). Here's what the card says.

"I found [the documentary] extremely interesting and really enjoyed watching it... However, I look so ugly, I had to shut my eyes every time I appeared on the screen. Ugh! You did a 'great job.' Love Doris!"

I'm still trying to figure out what the quotations marks around "great job" actually mean.

The phobia about her appearance isn't feigned, by the way - it was vanity in part that kept those sunglasses on most of the time (Doris always said she looked too old without them) - though at last year's Chicago Underground Film Festival I did notice Doris' eyes were watering chronically, which made me wonder if there wasn't a medical reason for the aversion to bright light as well.

Doris was a study in contradictions. A famously cantankerous woman who could become as coquettish as a teenager at the drop of a hat. A filmmaker who trafficked in sex, violence and extremity, but who never sent me a card that didn't have a picture of flowers on the front of it, or else a sentimental image of a cat. She was tough, she was driven and she was making films right up to the end, reportedly telling her biographer and pal Michael Bowen that everybody should "just keep working on the movie" - her latest, *Each Time I Kill*, shot only this past June, and now in the editing stage - as she was checking into the hospital that final time.

Doris was a complete original who led a long, eventful and unbelievably bizarre life that might make a better movie in the conventional sense than many of the films she herself created. But she was also one of the great cinematic outsiders, a crackpot folk artist and visionary who created a world on film more intense and personal and in its own way more revealing of who we were in her time and what we are as she leaves us than that of many more unjustly famed filmmakers.

In the immediate aftermath of her passing, Doris' official website at <http://doriswishman.com> became a grieving space for those who loved her. With webmaster David B. Wilson's permission, I wrote to many of the mutual friends I knew and some I did not know who had posted things there I found particularly salient or touching or profane. I asked to reprint their testimonials or else requested that they write something unique and specific for these pages. The results are published below, and they present a kaleidoscopic impression of Hurricane Doris at work and

at play that is fuller than anything I alone can say.

Before I turn you over to those humorous, poignant and occasionally obscene reminiscences, though, I wanted to sign off by paying tribute to the unsung hero behind the Indian Summer of fresh media attention and creative opportunity that waited across Doris' life in her final five years or so. That person is Michael Bowen, Doris' dedicated biographer, principal advocate, unstinting promoter and closest friend, who tirelessly and selflessly put her interests above his own for the entire half-decade I knew her.

It was through Michael's efforts (and, let it be said, the excellent presentation and promotion given her classic '60s and '70s era works by Mike Vinney and Lisa Petrucci of Something Weird Video) that Doris became the doyen of the underground film scene after years of neglect. An example: It was no surprise to see Doris at the Chicago Underground filmfest last year, since she was receiving the event's lifetime achievement award - deservedly so. It was very surprising to see Michael Bowen there, though, since he was living in France and working on his dissertation at the time. Mike looked like a nut that had been slept in when I ran into him that first of the four nights I was there, and if anything, he looked even more tired when I left.

His jet-lagged patience with Doris' sometimes demanding nature was something touching to see, and knowing that he was with Doris in her final days, when cancer finally claimed her at the age of 83, makes the thought of her passing a little easier to bear. And so I will risk being presumptuous by saying on behalf of all Doris' friends and fans the world over: Thanks Michael, for not only seeing Doris' value as a person and a filmmaker, but for having the tenacity to present it to the rest of the world, against some long odds.

But enough of the sob stuff. A life-force like Doris deserves to go out with a party, and so here it is, as thrown by friends and strangers and passersby, all of whom loved her in one way or another.

The cover charge for you? That you buy the cassettes, read the articles, and keep her memory alive. I'll be worth it, and it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. For surely one thing even those who don't "get" her films can't dispute is that we will never see the like of Doris Wishman again.

Tributes to Doris Wishman

IS THAT LOVE?

When my late father-in-law passed away, Doris came over to sit shivah - a Jewish custom of consideration for the dead. "You know... out of respect," she said. And she delivered: A little comfort, the proper gesture, and an elevating diversion to those in mourning. She immediately won more converts - as she often did.

I'll say this about Doris: It was an Event - to know and to work with her. She got under my skin the first time she called me. I was infatuated. I cared about her, I worried about her, I wanted to get my hands around her throat and squeeze. I'll miss her intensely. Is that love? RIP, Sweetie.

- BEAU GILLESPIE, PRODUCER
SATAN WAS A LADY

YES, I'M AN IDIOT!

During all those films we made together (I've lost count) you called me an "idiot" on each one. The only idiocy was not making more of them with you! As you have become an icon you have made me a mini-icon! (With apologies to Mike Meyers.)

- C. DAVIS SMITH, "CULT CINEMATOGRAPHER TO THE STARS"

TOO COOL FOR SCHOOL

Doris wasn't just cool for her age—she was cool in general! Gosh, am I glad I got to meet her last year. She had this idea for a film starring me called, "Have Penis, Will Travel." I was so hoping it would happen! Sigh. I sure am gonna miss the Little Doll, and am most regrettable I never got to cast her Tits. One of my Favorite Superheroes of all Times!

Much Love,

-CYNTHIA PLASTER CASTER, FILMMAKER, SCULPTRESS, SUPERGROUPIE

THE PURE POWER OF '70s PUNK

Doris Wishman was the MOST prolific female filmmaker of all time. Her work invokes a bizarre combination of the creative spirit of the French New Wave and the pure power of 1970's punk rock.

We can only hope that her tragic passing will cause such wonderful companies as Something Weird Video and Fly By Night Films to release all of her cinematic work on DVD. She deserves A LOT more, but that will do for now.

We love you and miss you Doris!

- SAM McABEE & LYNORA GOOD
Smutmattersonline.com

Tributes to Doris Wishman



BEHIND THE SHADES

My first impression upon meeting Doris was, "That is one tough little old lady." She was assertive, cantankerous, demanding and, at select and well-chosen moments, utterly charming. It was then that I realized we were dealing not with an eccentric, not with an interview subject, but with a director. She had us in the palm of her hand. She wasn't a subject in our movie. We were actors in her movie — the movie of her life.

And those shades — neither James Dean nor Elvis nor Jack Nicholson ever looked cooler. Unlike most women her age, she wore them with youthful aplomb and vigor. She looked hip. They belonged on her face. And how beautifully she used them. Like an actor uses their eyes, Doris wielded her shades. Not once during the interview did she remove them. And at no time did we wish she had.

And then, off-camera, I saw her remove them — just for a moment. For all of five seconds I saw her eyes, a fraction of a moment during which I caught a glimpse of the woman behind the director, the human being beneath the legend. She had a soul, this defiant little sparkplug, and it wasn't what I expected. It was sweet, sensitive and honest.

The shades went back on, but my perception of her, my respect and love, was forever changed.

However long it takes the rest of the world to appreciate Doris, to come to a recognition of her place in film history, those of us who were privileged to meet her, to know her, however briefly, will continue to keep the flame alive.

- WADE MAJOR, PRODUCER, *SCHLOCK! THE SECRET HISTORY OF AMERICAN MOVIES*

SHE LOVED FLIRTING WITH MY HUSBAND

Doris always wanted me to tell her the truth. She demanded I always give her my honest opinion. And when I did, we would have a fight. She hated people "yes-ing" her. And would say to me, "Never, never 'Yes' me. Don't ever tell me what you think I want to hear...after all, I don't know everything. I could be wrong... but I do know, my cat's smarter than yours!"

I love Doris Wishman. I cry as I write this... I had the honor of working with her in her first film in almost 25 years, "Satan Was a Lady." I didn't know she was ill during that time, as she didn't tell anyone. I admit, if I had, I may not have been so hard on her at times, (which is exactly why she didn't tell anyone).

After receiving a call from Beau Gillespie (the producer of *Satan*), I went to my local Vidiots video store and rented *Let Me Die a Woman*. It was tremendous. I couldn't believe I never knew who Doris Wishman was... How did I miss this??? It terrified me, but I knew I had to do it. I had to work with her. It would be history to work with her. And it was.

When I first laid eyes on Doris (the day before we shot), I remember thinking how much she looked like my family. I mean LOOKED like my family. She could be my Grandmother... (but Grandma never talked like that!) We walked and talked for hours. I had flown in from L.A. She showed me all of Coconut Grove, including the "Dildo Store" where she worked during the period when she was between projects. For the next few weeks, my life was "DORIS"... when we weren't shooting, we were on the phone.

Laughing. Arguing. Dishing. It was the last night of shooting. We wrapped around 1 am... After a brief stop at a local bar, Beau drove us home.

He dropped me at my hotel first, I went to Doris to say good-bye and she gave me her hand and said, "Now, don't cry, Honey." I did.

The following year I had the good fortune of seeing Doris on many occasions at film festivals. She LOVED flirting with my husband and got mad at me when I told her she was pretty.

I called Doris every other Friday. It's hard to believe that I can't call her anymore... But I still talk to her.

Doris, you are so loved and so missed. I still hear your voice and for that, I am so grateful. - HONEY LAUREN, ACTRESS

Tributes to Doris Wishman

MY BEST FIEND

Testy, tough but with an abiding sweetness about her, Doris Wishman is the most memorable film personality I've known. Her friendship, which grew out of an interview I did with her for my documentary *SCHLOCK! The Secret History of American Movies*, was one of the most valuable things (in a personal sense) that came from the film.

Although I spent years editing the project and whinling down the 120 minutes or so we spent together into the seven minutes that appear in the film, what I remember most about Doris isn't the interview itself but everything that surrounded that experience, and the wonderful reunion we had last year over the course of several days at the Chicago Underground Film Festival.

Things like: Doris' compulsion to create new titles for her unmade projects - "Jane Blonde, Secret Agent" was the idea she pitched me during the drive back from our shoot. Or Doris' unexpected reunion with several old business cohorts during an appearance at L.A.'s Nuart theatre. There was a person in the audience there who she felt had cheated, as she made clear when approached by this unexpected guest in the lobby after the show. The war between her anger over the past and the sentimental rush she got out of seeing an old and former friend played out on her face in such an open and direct way. I remember it with emotion to this day - an image of the polarities of aggression and feeling that drove this amazing woman, and which played out in her films.

Perhaps my fondest memory of Doris is the way she snuck up behind me during the first-ever public screening of *A Night to Dismember* in Chicago last year. It was a thin crowd thanks to the incredibly stupid decision by a feminist organization to run counter-programming by rock acts and filmmakers against the CUFF, but Doris - who was in some ways surprisingly shy - didn't seem to mind.

In one of those odd film festival moments, I was watching the movie accompanied by Cynthia Plaster Caster, the notorious '60s-era rock groupie. Suddenly, I felt a hand grabbing my shoulder. I turned; Doris had snuck up behind me. "Did that scare you?" she said of her sudden invasion of my physical space. "It's a scary movie, that was supposed to scare you."

I told her it did (a white lie) and kissed her hand

I think it's altogether wonderful that Doris left us with one last Wishman project to add to the canon. The indomitable ferocity of her commitment to filmmaking is, I believe, what kept her so alive and vital well into her '80s. That she left us with her career as a filmmaker uninterrupted - with an ellipsis as opposed to a period - is the most appropriate ending to her biological life cycle I can imagine. Because her celluloid life cycle, and the peculiar beauty of her cinematic achievement, will only grow and prosper over time.

I love you Doris. Say "Hi" to Sam Arkoff for me

- RAY GREENE, WRITER/DIRECTOR, *SCHLOCK! THE SECRET HISTORY OF AMERICAN MOVIES*

YOU WERE JUST GETTING STARTED

I can't believe how lucky I was to be able to spend some time with you. My only regret is that we never got a chance to make "Ben-Her..." or "Teacher Was A Hooker..." or "Straight To Hell..." or "The Kids In The Closet..." or "29 Anton Lane..." or "No More Room In Hell..." or "The Summer We Died..." or "Hell Hath No Fury..." or "What A Fuckin' Life..." or even "Lukie." Thirty films in, and you were just getting started.

- DAVID B. WILSON, WEBMASTER, doriswishman.com & EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, *EACH TIME I KILL*

FAN IN THE STREET

I've been a fan of yours ever since I first saw *Another Day, Another Man*. I was knocked right out by your style! I began collecting your videos. Then I saw you on the *Incredibly Strange Film Show* and was really hooked. What a wonderful, funny, smart woman, I thought! Most recently, I absolutely fell in love with you after listening to your commentary on *A Night to Dismember*, and I thought how wonderful that you were making more movies, and that someday I might get to meet you.

On Saturday I was buying a copy of *Satan Was A Lady* online, and thought I'd check in here. I saw the memorial and couldn't believe it. I was so sad. But reading all the sweet messages from friends and fans here makes me remember how happy and grateful I feel for the wonderful movies that you made and that I love so much.

Rest In Peace, Sweet Doris. I miss you.

- BRUCE GAULD, FAN

A TINY LITTLE MAE WEST OR SOMETHING

Doris was directing her 30th movie just two months before passing away, never once admitting to any of us that she was ill. Known as the most prolific female filmmaker of all time, Doris had begun independently writing, directing, and producing her own movies at a time when women just didn't do that sort of thing.

But the thing that made Doris special for me was her spirit. Playful and coquettish and dry, even joking with me up until the very last day she was able to take phone calls, it was her integrity and belief in her art and her dreams that kept her alive so long. I completely fell for her when we worked together, watching how she charmed everyone around her, this tiny little old lady with a husky voice and unstoppable flirtatious behavior. It was like being around a tiny little Mae West or something.

Doing the movie with her was the first movie I'd ever done, the first acting I'd done since grade school, and I was painfully nervous. She was so nurturing and patient and play-acted with me to get me to relax, making sure I felt comfortable and guiding me lovingly, and generously giving praise.

It amazed me to see how this woman in her eighties with advanced cancer and a curved spine not only commanded a room like she was the most beautiful woman in it, but kept working until the day she died. I learned three things from being around her.

1. Always tell people you love them, as you never know how much longer you have with them, and I am thankful to have had the opportunity to tell her I love her.

2. Always steal at least three mini muffin samples when you're in a Starbucks because you never know when you might get hungry. So what if they stare. And:

3. How important it is to keep working, no matter what, which is I'm sure what kept her going.

One of Doris's most famous quotes was, "When I'll die, I'll make films in hell." By the time I get there she'll probably have like twenty more films finished.

After making *Each Time I Kill*, Doris asks David Wilson (the exec producer), "Would Lisa be willing to play a lesbian in the next movie?" David says, "She'd love to." So when I call Doris in the hospital, one day before she got moved to intensive care and started going in and out of consciousness, I tell her I love her and that I hope she gets better. Without missing a beat, and please if you know her start picturing the Doris Voice and Delivery right now, she says to me, "You're only saying that because you want to play a lesbian." She was Doris till the end.

- LISA FERBER, "KATE BAXTER" IN *EACH TIME I KILL*

TO MY DEAREST "ALTHEA"

When we first met, Doris was convinced we'd dated in a previous life. I was flattered. So, over the last four years I've been known as "Johnny" in the sweet notes I'd exchange with "Althea." (It's fitting that a woman so direct would choose a pet name that means "truthful.")

Despite probably a 50-year difference in age, I found Doris to be one of the most playful, fun, flirtatious and open-minded people I've ever met. It was easy to forget that the person you were talking to looked like a little old Florida grandma-type. If someone were to see a transcript of our phone conversations, they'd probably think "Althea" was a dreamer with big plans for her life after film school, for her dreams were vast and plentiful. And though she realized many of her dreams, no doubt her mind was flooded with all her plans for the future as she lay in Jackson Memorial Hospital. No doubt she's hard at work in the afterlife pursuing those dreams. And (sorry Doris), I don't believe she's making films in hell as prophesized. For I believe she's somewhere in heaven complaining that none of her actors can speak, and that it's gonna cost a fortune to overdub them in post-production.

While I was grateful to see Doris one last time at Jackson Memorial, the memories I will cherish are the scores of our marathon phone conversations and the times we shared when she'd visit NYC, inviting the curiosity and stares of every person in any room she entered, even amid a sea of transvestites at Lucky Chang's.

I miss her very much already, but like all of you, I'm eternally grateful to have had her in my life. And if she can't help from checking in on us, I have this message for Doris...

Althea, I love you, too. Your Dearest Johnny
- DANIEL FERGUSON, SEGMENT PRODUCER, *LATE NIGHT WITH CONAN O'BRIEN*

THE OUTSIDER

Doris Wishman was without doubt the most important "outsider" filmmaker in the history of the cinema. Her work rivals that of Cassavettes or the Kocher Brothers - even Godard - in this respect; yet while each of these has been recuperated by the discourse on underground and independent filmmaking, only the outsider designation fully serves to situate Doris's unique output.

Self-motivated, self-trained and self-financed as a feature filmmaker during a time when American women had little to no presence behind the camera, Doris Wishman reinvented filmmaking with every new film she produced. She was Melies, Porter and Griffith all rolled into one, puzzling out the mysteries of narrative construction with every new scene, not as a self-conscious innovator in an overly-sophisticated art form, but rather as an ingenué willfully set adrift on the ever-vanishing tides of signification. Nobody who knows the cinema - nobody who LOVES the cinema - can miss this quality of absolute primal trust in the movies as a medium of self-actualization that is so evident in Doris Wishman's expansive work.

It was my great privilege to know and work closely with Doris over the course of nearly a decade (we met almost exactly 8 years ago this month) and I do not think I will ever meet a person more inspirational in the rest of my life. As I often told audiences when I had the honor of introducing her to appreciative crowds all over the world, "If I was a filmmaker, there is only one filmmaker that I would like to be. And that person is Doris Wishman."

Goodnight, my dear friend. Thank you for the boundless gift of an incomparable cinema to keep us all company until we meet you again.

- MICHAEL BOWEN, WISHMAN BIOGRAPHER

A TRUE AMERICAN ORIGINAL

I don't know where to begin. I don't think words can express what a remarkable woman Doris was. Complex in every way. A walking contradiction on so many levels. Irrespressible. Unpredictable. A creative mind spinning at a thousand miles per hour. I've never been so in awe of a person in my life.

She had a killer intellect and was sharp as a tack. She was energetic and probably the most vibrant person I have ever met. She could flirt with you outrageously and make a grown man blush and then turn on a dime and threaten you with bodily harm. When she wanted to be glamorous, she was glamour personified. When

she wanted to be charming, the most cynical person turned to Jell-O. She was kind and good and loving. She was also stubborn and demanding and exasperating. She was one of a kind. A true American original. What she accomplished in a Man's world is almost unfathomable. A one-woman tour de force. She had a unique vision. Anyone who doesn't find art in her work is really not paying attention.

The thing that comforts me right now is the fact that near the end of her life, Doris was rescued from obscurity and was showered with adulation from people all over the world. She could never believe that people still cared about her work and it inspired her to get back into doing the thing she loved most. And, of course, she really went out in a blaze of glory with "Satan Was a Lady." You really could not have scripted the last couple of years any better.

The last time I saw Doris was outside of a Chinese restaurant in NYC. She was standing all alone. I hailed a taxi and as I was getting in, I looked back at Doris, and she blew me a kiss. It made me smile and I blew a kiss back at her. I will miss you so much, Doris. You will always be an inspiration and a hero to me. God bless Michael B., and David W., Beau G. and everyone else who made Doris' life so wondrous and wonderful in her final years.

- MIKE HOOVER, FRIEND AND FAN

SHE PAVED THE WAY

The news of Doris' passing was met with much sadness at Something Weird headquarters. She was one-of-a-kind, a true original who kept up a dynamic pace even up to the end. We will always admire her spunk and unusual approach to filmmaking. We're honored to have so many of her films, and will work hard to keep Doris' cinematic legacy around for generations to come.

Though most of the SWV staff had never actually met Doris before, they felt they knew her personally given how many times they had seen and been in the company of her films on video. There's barely a time that one of her movies isn't being made for a customer.

I (Lisa) was fortunate enough to meet this fabulous lady in the flesh, and will always remember how warm and loving she was to me. Doris was in Boston for a screening of *Bad Girls Go to Hell*. That night there was a blizzard. It was difficult driving to the theatre given all the snow, and I probably shouldn't have been out and about, but this was an opportunity of a lifetime. I introduced myself to Doris (and Michael Bowen) at the press party before the screening. She was genuinely happy to meet me, and that really meant so much. She asked me to sit next to her and held my hand while we talked. I couldn't get over the fact that she was wearing high-heeled open-toed mules (given the weather), dark sunglasses (it was night), and a lightweight green wool coat (it was cold) but attributed this to keeping up her glamorous persona. People were taking her picture left and right. At one point someone snapped a photo when she momentarily removed her sunglasses and she shrieked, "Oh, you monster!" The shutterbug was totally taken aback. Experiencing Doris' wit and humor firsthand was truly a magic moment and I treasure that memory.

Doris will always be an inspiration and role model. She paved the way for exploitation-loving bad girls like me. Doris, thanks for always being yourself. I'll miss you.
- LISA PETRUCCI AND MIKE VRANEX, SOMETHING WEIRD VIDEO

WORKING WITH WISHMAN

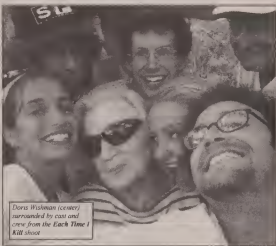
OR

"I WAS DORIS WISHMAN'S CAMERAMAN...AGAIN!!!"

Cinematographer C. Davis Smith on 38 Years of Collaborating With Doris Wishman

When future generations look back over the works of Doris Wishman, they will hopefully recognize the pivotal role in her achievements played by cinematographer C. Davis Smith. As director of photography on most of her films after 1964, it was Smith who helped achieve the harrowing, handheld immediacy that characterized her early roughies, a startlingly effective use of the lightweight 16mm cameras that became available during the period that bears favorable comparison to the work of proclaimed independent film "geniuses" like John Cassavetes and the cinema verité documentarians of the same era.

Smith kept working with Wishman right to the end, lensing portions of the infamous Chesty Morgan features *Deadly Weapons* and *Double Agent 73* in the 1970s and much of Wishman's blighted 1983 attempt to capitalize on the "slasher" craze, *A Night to Dismember*. Thanks to Wishman friend and amanuensis Michael Bowen, Smith returned to work with Wishman on her last project, the upcoming *Each Time I Kill*, shot in June of 2002. When contacted to contribute to this *Cult Movies* tribute, Smith surprised us all by offering to write a full-blown article, and we eagerly agreed. His reminiscences of almost forty years of working with Wishman offer a rare and priceless glimpse of the production approach of the "Queen of the Nudes," and a moving personal tribute to one irreplaceable woman. —Ray Greene



Doris Wishman (center) surrounded by cast and crew from the *Each Time I Kill* shoot

by C. Davis Smith

The temperature marked 100 degrees as I parked my mini-van on the corner of Miracle Mile and Ponce De Leon in Coral Gables. I could see into the window of Starbuck's Coffee Shop which was to be the gathering place for cast and crew on many of the upcoming mornings. There sat Michael Bowen, the line producer of Doris' latest epic *Each Time I Kill*...and Doris herself.

So far things had gone as I expected. For the six hours that it took me to drive through the center of Florida from my home in the middle of the state to the rendezvous point I had anticipated with much anxiety the return of madness revisited of thirty years past.

(Ripple Dissolve with eerie music)

Manhattan - 630 Ninth Avenue - 1964

Saul Swimmer of the Mike Todd

Organization was supervising the negative matching of a friend with whom I shared space on the third floor of The Film Center Building and casually asked my friend if he could recommend a cameraman for a lady director who was about to shoot her first film in New York City. He explained that the woman had made several nudist (or nudie-cutie films as we in the trade liked to call them) in Florida but had moved back to the city and was about to continue her career. Needless to say, my friend recommended me.

(Ripple Dissolve with bossa music)

Coral Gables - Starbuck's - July, 2002

"So, you're willing to do this again?" Doris asked me in her best New York Queens accent. Her mouth pursed out in that Doris Wishman trademarked smile as if she were sucking a thick milkshake through a straw in which there

was a slight obstruction. She shook her head in a negative manner. "Chuck, you're an idiot!" she squeaked...then sipped her cappuccino.

(Ripple Dissolve with 60's elevator music)

Times Square - Paramount Building - 1964

Doris's office was on one of the higher floors in the building. There were two desks and no windows. At one desk sat a tiny older woman talking on the telephone whom I assumed was a secretary. On the walls were posters of...

Behind the Nudist Curtain (1964)

Playgirls International (1963)

Gentlemen Prefer Nature Girls (1962)

Nude on the Moon (1962)

Prince and the Nature Girl, The (1962)

Diary of a Nudist (1961)

CULT MOVIES



Blaze Starr Goes Wild (1960)
Hideout in the Sun (1960)

The dichotomy of nude female body pictures plastering the room with this prim and proper looking secretary of another era and dress was my introduction to the bizarre world of Doris Wishman.

"I have an appointment with Doris Wishman," I said.

"I know! I know, already! You're Chuck Smith, right?" she said. It was a half scream. "I just got off the phone with Saul." She had calmed. "He said he was sending you over."

Doris could have been my Jewish mother with her speech patterns and mannerisms... if I hadn't been raised a Presbyterian.

"Would you mind filming females in the nude?" There was a coyness in her question. She scrutinized my every reaction.

Silently, I thought, "Hey, I'm the original red-blooded American boy!"

"Now that was a stupid question!" She seemed to be able to read my mind. "Of course, you wouldn't!"

That year was the beginning of the "roughies" for Doris. I shot *Bad Girls Go to Hell* and *The Sex Perils of Paulette*. I hand held a 35 mm Arriflex and shot in black and white on the streets of New York and in the apartments of friends of Doris. Although Doris appeared to ad-lib the scripts she always seemed to have an idea of what she wanted. I and the actors never found out what it was until we were about to roll the camera.

During the almost forty years I knew Doris it seemed to me she never changed. Oh, maybe a few more wrinkles, maybe bent a little more from the aging process. Doris was a diminutive five-foot-nothing of explosiveness and crafty-calm. She always retained her dry and sly sense of humor. Referring to herself, she claimed that good things come in small packages. After awhile, when we became work partners and could throw friendly insults I was able to add to that statement, "So does poison!"

I hadn't thought much about Doris in the twenty-odd year interim between the time I worked on *A Night to Dismember* as the cameraman and the phone call I received from Beau Gillespie asking me to provide my voice as one of the two narrators on the commentary track for its DVD release. The other voice was, of course, Doris. I'm told people are buying the DVD just to listen to the commentary track. We met in a post production house in Miami where I was seated next to Doris and we were fitted with lapel mikes. She kept hitting hers with her hand. It must have driven the recordist nuts! There are a few funny comments on the track alluding to this. Actually, Doris had little skill in the technical aspects of film/video making and had always relied on her support system of crew and post. But she had an incredibly bizarre imagination that she was able to transfer her personality to the screen.

Michael Bowen, who was functioning as the line producer on *Each Time I Kill* had become Doris's biographer and had phone interviewed me several times in the

past seven years searching the musty corners of my memory for tidbits about Doris. He knew more about Doris and me than I was able to recall. He even knew that I had photographed much of the two Chesty Morgan pictures, *Deadly Weapons* and *Double Agent 73*, even though I had not received screen credit.

He asked me if I wanted to be involved with *ETIK*. I said that I did but he informed me that it was a low-low-low budget and would I do it for per-diem? I remembered something I had told an interviewer for an article about myself in an earlier interview. "I love making films so much I would do them for free...but don't tell my clients!" Evidently this part of the article stuck in Michael's mind. I felt like those guys you see on the street with the signs that say, "Will work for food!" But the main draw, to me, was the opportunity to photograph another Doris Wishman production.

After thinking about my commitment for a couple of days my psychosomatic knee was hurting, telling me not to get involved! But that's the smallest masochistic tendency I had.

Doris understood match edits but there are a lot of times she would shoot and use cut-aways that seem to be an interference to the grammar of the film. She always wanted me to film tilts and pans of something from which to cut...trees, sky, water, wild animals, ash trays, telephones. They didn't need to make any intellectual sense. Just the fact that they were indignant to the shooting location was enough for Doris. They were her editing safety devices...the shots that got her over rough matches of continuity if she changed the thrust of the film during the editing process. Which she did regularly out of necessity.

Usually she would only have enough money to shoot for two or three days at a time and then when we picked up the current production again, sometimes weeks or months later, actors had vanished or locations were not available. But Doris somehow made films from these snips and pieces of film that she had squirreled away.

I find myself writing of Doris in the present tense and continually go back over what I have written changing it to the past. But Doris's productions keep her alive in our midst and will do so as long as fans world-wide continue to discover them. Doris was known as the Queen of exploitation films...

Long live the queen!

(Fans of Doris can contact C. Davis Smith at his Email address crazytoof@yahoo.com)

THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT MOVIES?

... THINK AGAIN!!!

AVAILABLE AT LAST ON VIDEOCASSETTE!
THE CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED TRIBUTE TO
THE GOLDEN AGE OF EXPLOITATION CINEMA!



SCHLOCK!

The Secret History of American Movies

The SEXY SHOCKER the critics called:

"VASTLY ENTERTAINING" (LA WEEKLY)

"RIVETING" (GLUE MAGAZINE)

"REMARKABLE... DESTINED SURELY FOR CULT STATUS" (THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER)

"A FUN AND EDUCATIONAL DOCUMENTARY THAT DEFIANTLY FILLS MY
QUOTA OF BREASTS AND BLOOD IN A FILM!" (FILM THREAT)



You've heard of Hollywood, a town of tinsel and glamour, the town of Paramount, Columbia and MGM. But there is another Hollywood, a place where maverick independent EXPLOITATION FILMMAKERS went toe to toe with the big guys and came out on top! "SCHLOCK! THE SECRET HISTORY OF AMERICAN MOVIES" takes you behind the scenes with the legendary EXPLOITATION and SEXPLOITATION filmmakers of those golden "DRIVE-IN" MOVIE days. It's sexy! It's strange! And every word is true!

STARRING: FORREST J ACKERMAN SAMUEL Z ARKOFF PETER BOGDANOVICH
ROGER CORMAN DAVID F. FRIEDMAN HARRY NOVAK MAILA NURMI (aka VAMPIRA)
DORIS WISHMAN

THE HOLLYWOOD YOU'VE NEVER SEEN! RARE FILM CLIPS!
SHOCKING INTERVIEWS! BRAZEN WOMEN! LUST-CRAZED MEN!

90 MINUTES OF UNBELIEVABLE, EDUCATIONAL EXPLOITATION ENTERTAINMENT FOR JUST
\$19.95 PLUS SHIPPING AND HANDLING! STUN YOUR FRIENDS! OFFEND YOUR PARENTS!
IMPRESS THE OPPOSITE SEX!

www.schlockthemovie.com

ORDER NOW AND GET OUR FULL CD SOUNDTRACK FEATURING AUDIO
CLIPS FROM THE MOVIE, THE FULL SCORE BY LEGENDARY L.A. POP
ICON JOHNNY ENGLISH AND UNUSED MUSIC EXTRAS ABSOLUTELY
FREE! SUPPLIES OF THIS FREE CD ARE LIMITED SO ACT FAST!
WHEN THEY'RE GONE, THEY'RE GONE!

* Because of the nature of its subject matter, "SCHLOCK! The Secret History of American Movies" contains scenes of strong sexual content and some violence. In purchasing this home video product you are certifying that you are old enough to know better, but are willing to watch on the wild side anyway. Good for you!



RETRO ENTERTAINMENT SINEMA™



HYPER HORROR & SCI-FI MOVIES

ATOM AGE VAMPIRE (1960) Dubbed in English From France! A Mad Doctor Restores A Beautiful Woman's Face & Becomes A Vampire!
 BATTLE BEYOND THE SUN (1963) See Aliens That Look Like Human Sex Organs Battle! Plus Russian Stock Footage! In English!
 THE BRAINAC (1961) Dubbed in English! A Brain Sucking Ferret Comes From Time & Space For Revenge! Wacky & Fun!
 CURSE OF THE DOLL PEOPLE (1961) Dubbed in English! Weird Erotic Horror From Mexico! Very Underated!
 CURSE OF THE SWAMP CREATURE (1966) Starring John Agar & Francine York! A Mad Scientist Turns People Into Monsters With Ping Pong Ball Eyes!
 THE DEVIL'S WEDDING NIGHT (1973) Dubbed in English! A Weird Castle & A Bunch Of Naked Ladies Waiting For Oracles!
 THE DEVIL DOLL (1964) Dubbed in English! A Stage Dummy Takes Over The Mind Of His Master! A Cult Classic!
 ON THE THRESHOLD OF SPACE (1957) Starring Guy Madison! A Story About Men's Struggles To Achieve Space Travel!
 RIDERS TO THE STARS (1958) A Film By Curt Siodmak! A Tale Of Man's Early Voyages Into Space!
 SAMSON VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMEN (1962) Dubbed in English! Strange Horror From Mexico!
 SAMSON IN THE WAX MUSEUM (1963) Dubbed in English! A Masked Wrestler Against Classic Wax Monsters!
 VOLCANO HIGH SCHOOL (2001) In Korean With English Subtitles! A Kung Fu Psycho Versus Of Harry Potter!
 VOYAGE INTO SPACE (1970) Dubbed in English! From A Rare 16mm Print! A Boy & Giant Robot Battle Against Giant Monsters!
 VOYAGE TO THE END OF THE UNIVERSE (1964) Dubbed in English! The Czech Sci-Fi Space Epic! Important To The USA By A.I.P.!
 ZOKTAR: THE THING FROM VENUS (1968) Starring John Agar In The Remake Of "It Conquered The World"! Amazing!

PSYCHO SWORD & SANDAL EPICS

HERCULES & THE PRINCESS OF TROY (1966) Starring Gordon Scott! Herc Battles A Giant Looking Sea Monster! The Best Ever!
 HERCULES AGAINST THE BARBARIANS (1964) Starring Mark Forest! Herc Helps The Polish Army Against The Mongols Led By The Son Of Genghis Khan!
 DESERT WARRIOR (1960) Starring Richard Montalban! Richard Is The Son Of A Sultan Who Must Battle To Reclaim His Father's Throne!
 MEDUSA VS. THE SON OF HERCULES (1962) The Son Of Herc Must Battle Against Medusa & Her Stone Men Horde & A Dragon As Well! Wild Effects!
 THOR AND THE AMAZON WOMEN (1960) Thor Battles Amazon Women! This Is Considered The Best "Bad" Sword & Sandal Movie Ever! Tons Of Broom Babes!
 VULCAN, SON OF JUPITER (1962) Starring Rod Flash! Vulcan Battles Greek Gods From Olympus, Lizard Like Monster Men & Weird Underground Menaces! Rare!
 VENGEANCE OF URSUS (1962) Ursus Seeks & Gets Revenge Against His Enemies & Helps The Oppressed Citizens Of A Small Village!

ATOMIC ASIAN SUPERHEROES & MONSTERS

ATOMIC RULES OF THE WORLD (1957) Dubbed in English! With Starman!
 Birdman and Force JETMAN (1991) Episodes 1-4 "In English" * A 5 Member Team & A Robot Battles Monsters!
 EVIL BRAIN FROM OUTER SPACE (1969) Dubbed in English! With Starman!
 KIKKAIDA: The Androd Of Justice (1972) 10 Volumes Available With Episodes In Chronological Order! English Subtitled!
 MAGIC SERPENT (1966) English Dubbed! Letterboxed Or Full Screen! Ninjas & Giant Monsters!
 SPACE GIANTS (1966-67) 13 Volumes Available! In Chronological Order! In English & Some Japanese!
 SPACE WARRIORS 2000 (1965) English Dubbed! A Ton Of Ultra Warriors Battle Wise Cracking Monsters!
 VOYAGE INTO SPACE (1970) Dubbed in English! Transferred From A Rare 16mm Print!
 YOUNG GU & DINOSAUR JU JU (1997) In Korean Only! This One Looks More Like "Yongery" Than The Remake!

WEIRD INTERNATIONAL ODDITIES

FILIPINO BATGUY & THE ROBBERS (1991) 30% In English! The Costume Looks Just Like Mr. West's!
 HEEEN-MAN: MASTER OF NONE (1989) 10% In English! A Weird Not So Menly Blonde In The Jungle!
 KOREAN BATGUY & THE ROBOT (1993) In Korean Only! A Mix Of Animation & Live Action!
 TURKISH E.T. (1985) In Turkish Only! You Won't Believe This Alien's Bugged Look!
 TURKISH EXORCIST (1982) In Turkish Only! This Actress Won't Be Doing A "Roller Boogie" Movie!
 TURKISH SUPERGUY (1978) In Turkish Only! A Dead Ringer For C. Reeves & A Nutcracker!!
 TURKISH EVIL SPIDER-GUY (1975) In Turkish Only! Plus Mr. America & The Mex Wrestler!
 TURKISH STAR T**K (1979) Turkish Only! See Mr. Speak! You Won't Believe This One!
 TURKISH STAR W**K (1982) Turkish Only! See Luke Kick Ass! Wild As Hell!
 ZUMA: THE HELL SERPENT (1960) In Filipino! Psycho Gore & Weird Reptiles!

VHS - \$17.95

DVD-R - \$24.95

FREE MEDIA RATE POSTAGE
 IN THE CONTINENTAL U.S.A.
 Add \$4.00 Per Your Entire
 Order if You Want Your
 Order Sent First Class.
 Allow 3 To 4 Weeks
 Shipping.

Payable & Mailable To:

CULT MOVIES

P.O. Box 1047

Hollywood, CA 90078

ALL SALES FINAL! All Tapes & Discs Pre-Checked Before Being Shipped

ATTENTION!

Please Do NOT ORDER Any Of Our
 Titles On DVD-R If You Do Not Know If
 Your DVD Player Is Compatible To This
 Format Of Disc! Go To www.vcdhelp.com
 To Check If Your DVD Player Can Play DVD-Rs.
 Thank You!



#25, Dario made the 3 Stooges Japanese exotic crime western world of Sergio Leone. Sara Kalford, Shirley Ullmer, Carl Lennine Jr., Vampires in Vegas, Akiba & Cendilo, much more.



#26, Special double issue! Cult Movies & Spineless! Frankenstein meets the Wolf Man, the real Godlike Forest J. Ackerman remembers Metropolis, Tribute to Rockship X-M, Dr. Who, much more.



#27, Three Trueman Movies: Brian Chandler, Ben Lugos, Best Dracula Ever: Blade Runner, Lon Chaney, Lucky Brown Studio, Vampires, 45J Adelman and much more!



#28, 7. Let Your Skin Grow! of Frankenstein, Japanese Erotica, 20. Milton Miles to Earth, Joyce Jackson Interview, George Raver, Ben Stoker and much more.



#29, Conrad Wed: Mystery of Merry Hall, Vera Langton Karloff on TV, The Phantom, Cress, Black Friday, The Island, Earth Starship, Trooper, Symposium, The Admonition Chronicle, Arthur Hiler more.



#30, Trash Master John Waters, John Wot, Barbara Tompkins, David L. Hewitt, Steve Dogs, Lugos, Fanny and much more.



#31, Yvette Vickers, Grace Welles, Dracula Invades England, Frankenstein, Drag Men, Bob Chinn, Repulsive and much more!



#32, Mighty Joe Egg Foo Young, the killing of Psycho, Mark Foster, the Last Omega Man, Rancid, The Supermodel, Carthage in the Cinema, 4. Terrors of Alfred Hitchcock, more.



#33, Destination: Moon, Relays of Chandra the Magician, Devil Bat, all about You! Feed Out, the Pamela Sue Mann story, Dracula's Last Hours, by Frank Dele Santo, and much more.



#34, Boris Karloff biography, all about The Mummy, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, the Last Days of Dracula, Godlike in Megalomania, Ackerman's Chronicle and much more.



#35, Reg Park: another alternative Hercules, The Fly, W.C. Fields, Herman Viper, Japanese sci-fi, Mel Brooks, Harry Langdon, Andy Miligan's Sargol and much more.



A comprehensive look at the making of two longest pilot episodes of TV: Superboy and Superpup. Complete scripts, interviews, over 150 rare photos and is a must-have for DC superfans.

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO:

CULT MOVIES MAGAZINE
PO BOX 1047
HOLLYWOOD, CA 90078-1047

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #1	\$9.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #23	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #7	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #24	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #8	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #25	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #9	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #26	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #10	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #27	\$9.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #13	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #28	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #14	\$19.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #29	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #15	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #30	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #16	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #31	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #17	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #32	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #18	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #33	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #20	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #34	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #21	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #35	\$7.95
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue #22	\$7.95	<input type="checkbox"/> Superpup	\$9.95

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

As you look through this magazine
you'll see ads for many mail-order video companies
but there is only one Leader of the Pack:

Video Search of Miami is #1

ACCORDING TO AN INDEPENDENT SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR OF DARK WATERS MAGAZINE, A RESPECTED ON-LINE NEWS SERVICE
VIDEO SEARCH OF MIAMI RATED #1 AMONG ALL VIDEO MAIL-ORDER COMPANIES IN THE WORLD. CHECK WEB FOR RESULTS
<http://super.zippo.com/~drikkwaits/resources/malorder.html>

Video Search is the Largest & Best Mail Order Company In America*

*as recommended by FANGORIA, PSYCHOTRONIC, SHOCK CINEMA,
VIDEO WATCHDOG, ASIAN CULT CINEMA, SHOCKING IMAGES and WIRED!

plus VSoM is also acclaimed by VIDEO HOUND MOVIE GUIDE,
the WHOLE EARTH CATALOG and COUNTER CULTURE HANDBOOK!

and Video Search Of Miami is the *ONLY* graymarket mail-order company
endorsed by LEONARD MALTIN in his MOVIE & VIDEO GUIDE BOOK!



#1 in SELECTION

THE LARGEST SELECTION IN THE USA!
MORE THAN 12,000 TITLES IMPORTED FROM
EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD

#1 in SHIPPING

VSoM IS THE MOST RELIABLE IN AMERICA,
VIDEOS ARE ALWAYS SHIPPED WITHIN 2 DAYS
NO EXCEPTIONS

#1 in SERVICE

VSoM IS NOT A FACELESS COMPANY,
PERSONAL TELEPHONE CORRESPONDENCE
AVAILABLE DAILY FROM NOON TO 6 PM

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

ALL TITLES DUPLICATED ON
VHS TAPE OR DVD

Video Search of Miami

PO Box 16-1917 Miami FL 33116 (888) 279-9773

TOLL-FREE NUMBER

VSoM accepts all major credit cards
VISA, DISCOVER, MASTERCARD
and AMERICAN EXPRESS

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.VSOM.COM

FULL AND DETAILED ON-LINE DESCRIPTIONS FOR 12,000 TITLES!



★ ★ ★ THE RETURN OF ★ ★ ★ RUSS MEYER'S "BIG GIRLS!"

Cult cinema's famous "Big Girls" are back again, in the new bra-busting movie masterpiece of all time!

THE DOUBLE-D AVENGER

SHE GIVES
VILLAINS
TIT FOR
TAT!



Starring KITTEN NATIVIDAD (Star of Russ Meyer's "Beneath The Valley Of The Ultravixens"),
HAJI (Star of Russ Meyer's "Faster Pussycat Kill! Kill!"),
RAVEN DE LA CROIX (Star of Russ Meyer's "Up!"),
FORREST J. ACKERMAN (Sci-Fi/Fantasy Film Icon)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

KITTEN NATIVIDAD
Star of Russ Meyer's
"Beneath The Valley Of The Ultravixens"

HAJI

Star of Russ Meyer's
"Faster Pussycat Kill! Kill!"

RAVEN DE LA CROIX

Star of Russ Meyer's "Up!"

FORREST J. ACKERMAN

Sci-Fi/Fantasy Film Icon

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Big, busty **Charity Knott** must use her new amazing abilities as the super-stacked costumed crime fighter, the **DOUBLE-D AVENGER**, to stop villainous bikini bar owner **Al Purplewood** and his sexy, murderous strippers.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Approx.
77 Mins.
Ages 18
And Over

ORDER NOW! - New Prices -

VHS Video (\$19.95) DVD (\$24.95)

Visit our website at **www.doubledavenger.com**

or call **818-773-3230**

Y

Z

1

